

# To Serve & Protect

## A Collection Of Memories



# CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION	Pg. 4
--------------	-------

1980 INTERVIEWS:	Pgs. 5-88
------------------	-----------

Matilda “Tillie” Sonnen	(1931-1971)	6-15
George B. Kahler	(1931-1965)	16-25
Thomas E. “Tom” Whitecotton	(1931-1965)	26-33
Herbert D. “Herb” Brigham	(1932-1961)	34-43
Glenn W. Lampley	(1935-1970)	44-47
Roy F. “Pappy” Dix	(1937-1961)	48-56
Herbert F. “Herb” Wickham	(1937-1966)	57-62
Robert E. “Nookie” Lee III	(1943-1976)	63-69
Herbert “Herb” Walker	(1943-1972)	70-76
Herbert H. “Herb” Lee	(1950-1973)	77-87

2005 INTERVIEWS:	Pgs. 89-161
------------------	-------------

Harry W. Duncan	(1937-1973)	90-95
Thomas W. “Tom” Pasley	(1939-1972)	96-103
Walter E. Wilson	(1942-1969)	104-110
James D. “Doc” Harris	(1948-1982)	111-112
Paul V. Volkmer	(1949-1987)	113-119
Ralph M. Rider	(1949-1979)	120-129
Donald E. “Don” Selvey	(1953-1989)	130-134
Ronald A. “Ron” Selvey	(1953-1989)	135-141
Robert J. “Bob” Hagan	(1958-1992)	142-146
Maurice B. “Rip” Russell	(1958-1988)	147-152
Charles F. “Frank” Durham	(1962-1996)	153-156
Dale P. Shikles	(1970-2006)	157-161

*(The years in parentheses refer to employment dates.)*

# INTRODUCTION

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To commemorate the Patrol's 50th anniversary in 1981, Sgt. Charles E. Walker created a book entitled, "Trooper", a compilation of 10 interviews with Patrol retirees. Twenty-five years later, these interviews have become part of our treasured history. The Patrol owes Sgt. Walker (who is now retired and resides in Jefferson City, Missouri) a debt of gratitude for preserving the memories of these pioneers.

It is now 2006, and the Patrol is celebrating its 75th anniversary. To commemorate the occasion, the Public Information and Education Division is printing a book called "To Serve & Protect". In this edition, you'll find the original interviews by Sgt. Walker, and 12 recent interviews by Public Information Specialist III Cheryl D. Cobb, Q/PIED.

As Sgt. Walker said in the preface of "Trooper": For those of you whose long-time friends are featured in these pages, we hope your reading brings back fond memories. For those of you who are meeting these Patrol employees for the first time, we trust the experience is a pleasant one.

*Sincerely,*

*Captain Christian T. Ricks*  
*Q/PIED*

# 1980

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## INTERVIEWS

# MATILDA “TILLIE” SONNEN

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*With a career that spanned four decades and part of a fifth, Tillie Sonnen owns the distinction of having the longest working career of any Highway Patrol employee: 40 years. She was there at the Patrol's modest beginning and witnessed the growth of the department to a force of over 700 officers. Always a dedicated employee, Tillie exhibits a ready humor and zest for life, undiminished by the passage of time.*

“If they like you, they'll hire you permanently. If they don't, you're gone, no questions asked.”

That's what I was told before taking temporary employment at the Missouri Highway Department Headquarters here in Jefferson City. It was February of 1931, and I was glad to find a job, even if it was only for a few weeks, because the hatchery where I'd worked for seven and a half years had closed, leaving me unemployed. I started in the secretarial pool, working beside my roommate, Hilda Hutchinson, who still lives with me today. When one of the divisions needed a typist, they'd call down and we'd work for one fellow until a particular project was completed, then be assigned to someone else. Hilda had started working there in September of 1930, and was soon assigned a permanent job in one of the divisions, but I remained in the pool. Though I didn't know at the time, this was the best place I could have been, for it led directly to my career with the Patrol.

Governor Caufield signed the bill creating the Highway Patrol on April 24, and soon thereafter named his secretary—



*Matilda “Tillie” Sonnen*

Lewis Ellis, of Bethany,—as the first superintendent. The bill became effective on September 14, so there was a great deal of work to be done in a short time. Applications had to be printed, sent out, and screened when they came back; applicants had to be tested, and the very structure of the Patrol had to be planned — all in the space of a few months.

One day in July, Moe Dribben, the personnel manager for the Highway Department, two other secretaries, and I — principally because I had no permanent assignment — were sent over to the governor's office to help process letters from prospective applicants for the Patrol.



*Trooper J.D. Ellis is shown working in the fingerprint room at General Headquarters.*

We found a filing cabinet filled with over 5,000 letters requesting applications; they were in no particular order, just pitched in as they arrived in the mail. The four of us sorted them by county, weeded out those who were too young, too old, ineligible for some other reason, and sent out applications. In the meantime, the two secretaries returned to the Highway Department, leaving Moe and I to study the applications when they arrived. After screening out more men who didn't qualify, we set up an examination schedule according to senatorial districts and notified candidates when to appear for their tests. While we handled the applications, Superintendent Ellis, his assistant, Major Lewis Means (actually a captain, but called "major" from his military rank), and the legal counsel of the Highway Department, Marvin Krause, toured several states, investigating their state police organizations for ideas on how to organize the Missouri Patrol and to look at their uniforms, cars, and other equipment. Our organization was pat-

terned mostly after the New Jersey State Police, but they also visited Pennsylvania, New York, and Michigan.

Although the Patrol Act called for a force of 125 officers, lowered appropriations reduced the number to 55, of which six were captains and 49 were troopers. Besides Means, two other men were named captains before recruit training began: Louis Eslick and Albert Sheppard, both of whom helped in the selection process. The other three were named later: Thomas Leigh, when he began training, and William Baxter and Schuyler French at the end of training.

During the English examination for Patrol candidates, I remember checking one fellow's that read, "I arrived at the axident scene at 10 p.m." I showed it to Sheppard.

"Reads okay to me, Tillie," he chuckled. "He wrote it like it sounded."

From July to September we worked from 8 a.m. until 6 or 7 p.m. There was so much to do, and we were anxious to have everything ready by the 14th. One of the girls working with us complained. "I've had it!" she said. "I was hired to work eight to five and I'm not going to work any more long hours!" Well, I thought, you haven't been out of work for awhile like I have. Heck, I was just glad to have a job.

September passed, then October, and Moe Dribben and I were still "temporarily" assigned to the Patrol. "You can stay on here, I'll bet," said Dribben. "They'll need a secretary and you've been with them from the first. I'll be going back before long, but something tells me they'll keep you if you want to stay." But as November



began and the graduation date for the first class of recruits approached, I hadn't heard anything definite.

Colonel Ellis invited me to ride with him to the graduation ceremonies in St. Louis. On the way down he said, "Miss Sonnen, I don't know whether anyone has told you or not, but I've asked that you be transferred to the Patrol permanently. I hope you like it."

Like it? Why, I was thrilled to death! It was a new organization, the first statewide police organization in the history of the state. I can't describe how exciting it was to be there at the beginning, just being part of it, seeing it grow and develop, meeting and working with the officers, sharing their experiences.

General Headquarters and Headquarters Troop (now Troop F) occupied two rooms in the Capitol building when we started. I worked for both the troop and GHQ. Colonel Ellis's secretary, Rose Bender, and I were the only stenographers, but we were all they needed, because Headquarters Troop consisted of just eight officers: Major Means, Sergeants Lewis Howard and Ben Booth

(seven sergeants had been named statewide in addition to the six captains), and Troopers Harry Hansen, Ray Cushman, Jim McCann, Paul Burge, and Gilbert Fowler.

I'll never forget the morning the first reports arrived from the field. As stenographer, I was supposed to type up the summaries, but Sergeant Howard was so excited and curious, that he grabbed the reports and typed them himself. I kidded him about it later on. "Boy, you're not as anxious to total up those reports as you were the first day," I said.

You can understand our enthusiasm, though. We had no idea what the reports would be like, what adventures the officers would encounter. Some of them were funny. I still have a service rendered slip dated February 20, 1932, and signed by Means and Howard that reads, "Removed very dangerous piece of auto casing from the road. Then slowed down to avoid hitting hens (very valuable service). No dead cats in sight and couldn't find any to kill and place on the highway to remove."

They were only partially kidding about the cats. Some of the men sharpened



*The 1st Recruit Class prepares for graduation, 1931.*





*Colonel E.I. "Mike" Hockaday sits at his desk.*

their shooting eyes by controlling the stray cat population in rural areas.

My salary with the Patrol was \$115 a month, which was almost as much as the officers earned, at \$125. When the men received their first raise, I typed the letters notifying them. Without thinking I blurted out, "Well, gosh, what do us secretaries get out of it?" The next morning Rose and I found two-pound boxes of candy on our desks, with notes from Colonel Ellis: "For good work, well done." He'd overheard me.

Lewis Ellis was a fine choice for the first superintendent. He was intelligent, a good speaker and writer (he had a newspaper background), even-tempered, firm but fair, a friendly person and easy to work for. He was young, about 32 at the time of his appointment, but a very able superintendent.

When this ticket-fixing scandal in Troop C hit the news recently, people said, "My, what a shame. Something like this has never happened before to the Highway Patrol." But it has. Only six months after the organization was formed, the first officer was terminated, not for ticket-fixing,

but for taking a bribe. The officer later wrote Ellis a letter apologizing for betraying the trust placed in him, but the termination stood. This first incident happened in February of 1932, and it wasn't long before another officer was accused of misconduct: drinking in uniform. The Patrol held a hearing, found him guilty, and fired him, too.

These events were the exception, never the rule. Most of the officers were honest, hardworking, and dedicated to their jobs. There's no question in my mind that the efficiency, dependability, and helpfulness demonstrated by the first troopers saved the Patrol, for there were those who would have abolished it. The bill creating the organization was defeated several times before passage in 1931, and other pieces of legislation were introduced in following years to disband the Patrol. Colonel Ellis emphasized that officers were to help people whenever they could, and by following his philosophy, they won the respect and friendship of thousands of Missouri citizens.

Speaking of hard work, I received a letter from Ray Cushman recently in which he mentioned that at the beginning they rarely took a leave day. They were afraid to, because in those Depression-ridden years, thousands were line up for their jobs.

When the first class graduated, each man was given a choice of driving a car or a motorcycle, and Cushman chose a cycle. "Cush," I asked him one time, "why did you choose the motorcycle?"

"Tillie," he replied, remembering cold rides and countless spills, "I'll be durned if I know."

Cushman and Jim McCann were the only single troopers in the area and they cut quite a swath through the single girls around Jefferson City. A few days before Christmas in 1932, they came in the office with six or eight boxes of candy. "Tillie,

would you wrap these for us?" they said. I loved to wrap packages, and when I finished, they asked, "Which one's the prettiest?" I examined them and picked one. "That's for you," they said.

They took the others, tagged them "Merry Christmas from Cush and McCann", and gave them to their girlfriends, most of whom they'd both dated. Can you imagine two guys giving joint gifts to the same girls? Well, that's what they did.

McCann later confined his affection to two girls, one from Jefferson City, and the other from Hannibal. "Tillie, I got a tough job to do," he said one morning.

"What's that?"

"I've got to tell this gal here in Jeff that I'm going to marry the one in Hannibal. This is sure going to be rough."

I don't know who it was roughest on, the girl or McCann, but he did wind up marrying the one from Hannibal.

Lewis Ellis was superintendent until May of 1933 when newly elected Governor Guy Park replaced him with B. Marvin Casteel. Casteel was a good superintendent, but I always thought it was too bad Ellis served so short a time. He was a great planner and I'm sure he had dreams of making the Patrol even better, but it wasn't to be.

With the administration changing, all of us civilians expected to be terminated, as was the custom then. The first to go was the janitor. "We're next," promised Rose Bender. It was terrible, sitting there at your desk, wondering when they'd call you in and tell you your services were no longer needed. In early June, Rose was replaced by a girl sent in by the governor's office. It's only a matter of time, I told myself.

On Monday, morning, the twelfth of June, Colonel Casteel walked in the office with a lady wearing a gray suit and cape.

She was short and very attractive. My replacement, no doubt.

Casteel and the girl went into his office. A few minutes later, the buzzer sounded. Tillie, you're gone, it seemed to say. But, he didn't want me; he wanted his new secretary, Mrs. Watts. I sat there on the edge of my seat until the three of them came out a few minutes later. "Miss Sonnen," said Casteel, "I'd like you to meet my wife," indicating the girl in gray. Was I surprised!

When the colonel and his wife had gone, I confided to the secretary that I'd thought Mrs. Casteel was there to take my job. When she stopped laughing, she said, "I've got to tell the colonel about that. Do you mind?"

"No, of course not," I said.

Mrs. Casteel laughed about it the next day. "Boy, I didn't think it showed that I wanted a job that bad," she said. (They had five children and the colonel's salary barely enabled them to live comfortably.)

On Wednesday, the fourteenth, Sergeant Ben Booth and Sheriff Roger Wilson of Boone County were shot and killed at a roadblock north of Columbia. Booth was the first Missouri trooper to lose his life in the performance of his duty. Colonel Casteel was forced to remain in the troop headquarters most of the day to coordinate the manhunt, but everyone else was out searching for the killers. Five o'clock came and Mrs. Watts went home, but I stayed to help any way I could. I guess I didn't go home until after 11 o'clock that night, and I was back at my desk early the following morning. The search continued for two years, finally resulting in the capture of George McKeever, who killed Booth, and Francis McNeily, who shot Sheriff Wilson.

A few days after the murder of Booth and Wilson, Colonel Casteel called me into his office. "Miss Sonnen, I don't want



*Trooper Arthur R. "Ray"  
Cushman, 1931.*

you to worry anymore about your job. You'll stay as long as I will."

Boy, that made me feel good. Then, a few months later I had cause for doubt. Talk was that a girl had been selected to replace me by the governor's office. Ha, I thought, that reassurance I got awhile back was just a politician talking. One morning, a call came to our office for the other girl. I told them, "Sorry, she doesn't work here," (But, she soon will and Tillie won't, I added, under my breath). I had misjudged Casteel, for he went to bat for me, telling them I'd been there at the beginning, knew the job, and that if discharged, I'd just go back to the Highway Department. For once, the administration gave in and let me stay.

It's hard to believe, but General Headquarters moved 11 times before finally being housed in a Highway Patrol building. When the legislature convened in 1933, we moved from the Capitol building to the top floor of a big house near Madison Street and Capitol Avenue, where the municipal garage is today. At the conclusion of the legislative session it was back to the Capitol. In 1935, we were in the



*Trooper J.G. McCann, 1931.*

Church Building across the street from the house, and in 1937, we were quartered in the building next to the Missouri Hotel on High Street.

Trooper J.D. Ellis worked in the fingerprint section next door to the typists' room in the Capitol. One day I was typing along when I heard a Pop! from the direction of Ellis' office. I didn't think too much about it, thinking he might have dropped something, or that it might have been a car backfiring outside. Suddenly the door burst open and Ellis came running in with a dazed expression on his face.

"What's the matter, Ellis?" I said.

"I—I—pulled the trigger," he stammered.

We investigated and found that he'd fired a round into the wall between the offices while cleaning his pistol. Somebody pasted a bull's-eye target over the hole and it hung there for years afterward above the filing cabinets.

Ellis entered the service in World War II and died in a concentration camp in

Japan. He was a nice fellow, but probably never would have been hired today, because he walked with a slight limp. During the war several men were hired with partial disabilities.

In 1939, we left the Capitol forever and were given the ground floor of the Broadway State Office Building, which we shared with other state departments. In later years, we occupied larger sections of the building as we gained employees.

Eleven moves of desks, chairs, files, and supplies — no telling how many pairs of scissors we lost! Captain Bob Moore expressed his disapproval of our quarters in the Broadway Building to Colonel Casteel, saying we needed more room. “Oh, forget it,” said the colonel. “We can get along fine now. By the time we need more space we’ll have our own building.” Little did he realize that it would be 1963 before his prediction came true, 24 years later.

Inmates of the penitentiary always did the moving. At the Broadway Building, one of them wasn’t working fast enough to suit Captain Moore. “You there, hurry up, and get going, and move that furniture,” he ordered.

The inmate eyed him and said, “Listen, mister, I’ve got 99 years to do this, and I’m in no hurry to get finished.”

One of the most impressive officers on the force in the ‘30s and early ‘40s was Bob Moore, who joined the Patrol in 1931 and left in 1946. His memory was phenomenal. He’d read a book and recite passages verbatim. Moore started the Identification Bureau and also organized and commanded the Safety Squadron, a group of officers who traveled the state on motorcycles, promoting safety through concentrated enforcement and public programs. In fact, Moore originated a lot more ideas than he ever received credit for. He’d drop a suggestion on his supervisors and before long there would be an

order starting a new program or procedure. Moore didn’t care as long as things got done.

We had only one bathroom in that old house at Madison and Capitol, a bothersome situation at times, especially when someone would go in, sit down, and start reading a book. Bob Moore was one of the worst offenders. People would be lined up outside while Moore read inside. Finally, somebody would holler, “Hey, Moore! You’re wanted on the telephone!” It was the only way to get him out.

About 1933, we were giving examinations to Patrol applicants when I got into the middle of a feud between two captains. Each was conducting a different test. The first one handed me about a hundred physical exams saying, “Here, you hold on to these for me. I’ve got to leave for awhile, but I’d like to go over them again when I return.”

As soon as the first captain was gone, the second walked over to my desk. “Those papers belong to me. Give them here,” he ordered. Here was one guy trying to spite the other, and me in between.

“Okay,” I said, “take your durned old papers.”

Bob Moore saw the whole thing and thought it was funny. “Don’t get hot, Tillie,” he said. “Don’t get hot.”

A few minutes later the first captain came back in the room. “I’d like to have those exams, please,” he said.

“I haven’t got them,” I said.

He knew exactly where they were and left to hash it out with the other fellow.

After I cooled down, I began thinking that if word of how I’d talked to that officer reached Casteel, he might not approve. I was starting to worry when Major Means came up and said, “Colonel Casteel wants to see you.”





*Captain Robert E. Moore sets up miniature motorcycles. Capt. Moore was in charge of the Safety Squadron.*

My heart skipped a beat. "Did you tell him what happened?" I asked.

"Yeah."

I was shaking as I approached the colonel's office. I just knew he was going to say, "Listen, if you're going to talk to a captain like you just did, we can't have you around."

When I walked in, Casteel said, "Miss Sonnen, what's your salary?" Oh, no, I'm getting a pay cut, I thought.

"A hundred fifteen a month." I managed to say.

"Okay, beginning the first of the month, it'll be \$125," he said.

I was flabbergasted. I don't remember thanking him or saying anything. I just turned around and walked out fast before he changed his mind.

The World's Fair was held in Chicago in 1933, and several of our men served on a detail there. I went up and enjoyed the sights. I came back with Trooper Harry Hansen, his wife, Martha, and Trooper

Charlie Newman, who was driving. Harry sat in front with Charlie, and Martha and I were in the back. That was a wild ride, let me tell you. Newman was taking the curves so fast that steamer trunks stacked in the seat slid over and mashed us. Then, he'd swing into a curve the other way and the trunks would slide back off of us. We were screaming around a turn somewhere in Illinois when we began going in circles. When we stopped, we were heading back toward Chicago! Poor Martha began crying and begging Charlie to slow down, but he never did. We left Chicago at 11:30 p.m. and pulled into Jefferson City at 7:45 the next morning, with many coffee stops en route. Not a fast trip by today's standards, but in 1933, roads weren't so good. What an experience!

Major Lewis Means was known for being close with his money, but there was one officer who was considered even tighter: Melvin Dace of Troop E. The fellows used to tell about Dace going into a restaurant in Chicago during the World's Fair and ordering pie and coffee.

"Would you like cream on your pie?" asked the waitress.

“Does it cost any more?” said Dace. “If it does, I don’t want it.”

In 1939, Colonel Casteel left the Patrol for a job with the WPA. Mrs. Watts, his secretary, went with him, and I became secretary for the acting superintendent, A.D. Sheppard. Following Sheppard came Ramsey, Ginn, Wallis, Waggoner, Harrison, Waggoner again, and Hockaday. Except for the last two superintendents, Sam Smith and Al Lubker, I’ve worked for every one the Patrol has had.

I came close to quitting once under M. Stanley Ginn, who served from 1941 to 1944. I got a call one weekend from the office to come over and take dictation. This wasn’t unusual, as I’d sometimes come in on Saturday or Sunday when a big investigation was under way. I started over to my desk to pick up my notebook and pencils when one of the sergeants said, “Tillie, your desk was moved.”

“It was?” I said in surprise.

“Yeah, they moved it out of the front office. A new girl’s been hired as the superintendent’s secretary.”

It was all right with me if he wanted to hire someone new (she was a cute little thing), but at least he could have said something before he moved me from one office to another.

“OK,” I said. I was burning. I went in and told Ginn, “I’ve never felt any more like quitting than I do right now.”

Mike Hockaday, then a sergeant, said, “Now, Tillie, don’t quit. Just sit tight and let things ride.”

I was still mad, though, and if I hadn’t been taking care of my mother at the time, I’d have told Ginn what he could have done with the job, but I stuck around. As things turned out, it was the right decision.

The new girl resigned very soon afterward; then they brought in another one who couldn’t spell, and I wound up doing all her work. When she took dictation, I’d have to sit in to make sure nothing was left out! Ginn finally left for the service in 1944.

Ginn got off on the wrong foot with me in the beginning. After his appointment to superintendent in November of 1941, he brought me a stack of letters of congratulation — over 400 of them — from friends and well wishers.

“Here. Answer these,” he said. “You’ll have to pick out my fishing buddies and attorney friends. They get special letters.”

Well, I didn’t know him or them and I was overwhelmed at the task before me. Most of the letters made no direct reference to the writer’s occupation or relationship to Ginn, so how was I to proceed? I wound up reading all of them and guessing by what was said in the letter to which category the person belonged: social, business, and so on. That was a job.

When Trooper Hugh Waggoner was appointed superintendent in 1945, you might say it was a surprise to most of us. Why, I’d hardly heard of him; he wasn’t the sort of fellow that attracted attention. Waggoner’s first question when he moved into his new office was, “How do I answer the telephone?”

He didn’t know whether to say, “General Headquarters”, “Highway Patrol”, “Hello”, or what. His first term as a superintendent was largely a learning experience. Luckily, K.K. Johnson and Mike Hockaday had been there for years and knew the ins and outs of running the organization. When Waggoner returned for his second hitch as Patrol head, though, he’d gotten it together. His interim job with the National Safety Council had taught him a lot about administration, I guess.

I was Colonel Mike Hockaday's secretary for six years following Hugh Waggoner's death in 1965. Colonel Hockaday is retired now, too, but he is still active in community affairs (The Salvation Army, State Retirees' Association, Memorial Hospital Auxiliary). He just can't say no. My first memory of Colonel Hockaday is of his coming into GHQ to talk to J.D. Ellis and learn how to read fingerprints. It was 1937, and he was a Patrol applicant. We were always interested in the fellows who were applying.

"You just wait," one of the officers said. "That Hockaday fellow will be in before long."

I can still see him, wearing a white, stiff-brimmed hat, and smiling at everyone.

I've been secretary of the Patrol Retirees' Association since 1972. It's not terribly difficult, but it does involve some time. I told them recently I thought someone else should have a chance at the job. When retired Lieutenant Fenimore, the chairman of the nominating committee heard that, he said, "Oh, hell, she can't quit."

The job has kept me in touch with people and this is important. I don't know how anybody could work for an organization most of his adult life and then just walk out the door and forget about it. Looking back to 1931, I remember how close everyone on the Patrol was, like a family. Of course, there were fewer of us and the organization had to grow to keep pace with the times, but when it grew larger, some of that closeness was lost. It was inevitable, I suppose.

I visit GHQ often and everyone is so wonderful to me. I know some must wonder, "What's that old woman doing out here?" But, I still feel that I'm a part of the Patrol and that I always will be. I'm just

grateful for the opportunities I've had to know such fine people.

*(Editor's Note: This interview took place in 1980. Ms. Tillie Sonnen died on July 7, 1996.)*



# GEORGE B. KAHLER

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*George Kahler was a member of the original class of the Highway Patrol in 1931, and remained with the force until 1965, when he retired with the rank of lieutenant. He and his wife now reside in Springfield most of the year, but winter in Florida with their son and daughter. With Tom Whitecotton, whose story follows this one, George shares the distinction of having shot it out with Bonnie and Clyde in the early 1930s, the heyday of the gangster.*

Back in 1931, I was living in Crane and working for Tidewater Oil Company as a service station manager. I was happy there and earning a fair salary for the times about \$90 to \$100 a month with salary and commissions. Then the company put us on a commission basis only. This reduced my wage to about \$80, but I didn't worry too much, as I knew I had a good chance of a promotion soon. The man who was my immediate supervisor was scheduled to move up and I was slated for his spot. But, Tidewater insisted on his taking the promotion at the same salary as his present one, so he refused, effectively barring my advancement.

I was inventorying the stock one afternoon, anticipating my date in Joplin that night. I was going with my future wife. A friend dropped by and I guess I seemed too rushed to talk.

"Why are you in such a hurry?" he asked.

I told him about the date.

"Gee, I've got a girl in Joplin too," he said.



*Trooper George B. Kahler*

"Well, go change your clothes and come along."

Joplin is about 70 miles from Crane. All the way over and back he talked about how he'd applied for the Missouri Highway Patrol, which was just coming into being then. He had applied for a captaincy—you applied for a specific rank in the first class of troopers.

"I don't know what it pays, but it's bound to be more than you're making now," he told me. "I'm sure I'm going to be hired, and I'll do what I can to get you a spot."

I wasn't interested. I thought I'd just hang on with Tidewater and see if some opportunity didn't pop up soon.

We arrived back in Crane at about the time for me to report for work. Later that morning my friend showed up with an application from the Patrol. "Fill it out," he insisted. "It won't hurt to try. But be sure and send it in right away. They're going to select people for the class."

"It'll do no good," I thought. "They've already processed over 5,000 applicants and probably picked the persons they want. But, what the heck, I'll send it in to see what happens."

Three days later, I received a notice to go to Jefferson City for the entrance examination. Four or five days after that a telegram arrived telling me I'd been selected. After considering my situation, I accepted the appointment. The Patrol did pay a little more; we started at about \$115 a month. Ironically my friend—who was sure of a captaincy and was going to put in a good word for me—wasn't selected.

Recruit training was held at the St. Louis Police Academy. It began on October 5, 1931, and lasted about six weeks. Everyone in the class had to learn to ride a motorcycle. Why, I couldn't even ride a bicycle, still can't. Our driving course was Forest Park, quite an experience, I assure you. To cap it off, they assigned me to ride a 'cycle on the road. I kept the thing for two years. Then, to my relief, was assigned a car.

I'll never forget the day we completed training. We were ordered to ride our motors to the Harley-Davidson shop for a final checkup before starting home. I was coming out of Forest Park, approaching an intersection where five streets met. The light turned red ahead of me. I couldn't remember how to stop that darned motorcycle. I fumbled around and somehow hit the button that activated the two red warning lights. The traffic opened up and let me slide right through. It took

me two blocks to get that machine stopped.

I intended to ride all the way to Springfield that night, but I ran into a rainstorm and was forced to rent a room in St. James. It was still dark when I left for home the next morning. I came around a curve on old Highway 66 at the Little Piney River bridge and barely touched my handbrake to slow the cycle. I was traveling only about 20 mph, but the brake locked and upset me.

I flew off toward the guardrail. I tried to turn my body, so I'd go underneath, but it hit me right between the shoulders. I was wearing my uniform, topcoat, and raincoat, with my gun and holster pulled up so they rode in my lap. The extra clothing probably protected me from serious injury. The motorcycle was undamaged. I was shaken, but able to continue on to Springfield.

I was assigned to work out of Joplin, the headquarters for Troop D then. Our office was in the Highway Department building, and there were only three patrolmen stationed in the town, the troop sergeant, John Soraghan; Harve Sayers; and I. Superintendent Ellis decided to give the married officers a furlough for the Christmas holidays. Being single, I was assigned temporarily to Troop C in Kirkwood to replace one of the married men. I patrolled in his Model A Ford roadster, a pleasant change from the motorcycle.

My first day in Kirkwood, I woke up in pain. I went on in to troop headquarters, where Captain Leigh noticed I was experiencing some discomfort.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"I've got a heck of a pain in my side," I said.

He sent me to the doctor. "Have you been in an accident recently?" he inquired.

"No ... wait a minute. Yeah, I did have a little motorcycle accident about six weeks ago."

"Well the tops of four of your ribs are broken off," he said. "I'll tape you up, and I think you'll be all right."

I recall another incident that occurred a year or so later. My wife and I had been married only a short time. There was a movie playing in town that we wanted to see, and I'd promised her that we'd go that night. I usually worked an afternoon-evening shift, but had attend court in the morning, so all I intended to do was make a run north on U.S. 71 to Lamar and back and call it a day. "I'll be in by seven o'clock," I promised my wife as I left the house.

I was going along on my motorcycle a few miles north of Carthage about 11 o'clock when I met Trooper Charlie Newman, who was stationed at Nevada. He was flying down the road as fast as that Model A would travel. He stuck out his arm and motioned for me to turn around and follow.

"The office called," said Newman. "There's been a burglary at Roaring River. Park your motor and we'll head down there."

I left my machine at the Chevrolet garage in Carthage. On the way he gave me what details he knew. The burglars had fled in a car, but had abandoned it and evidently were afoot in the timber.

We met Captain Eslick at the scene where the fellows had abandoned the get-away car. After a short parley, it was decided to station me on a hilltop where two

animal trails intersected. They thought maybe the burglars might try to use those to get through the woods. This hill was really in a remote area; in fact they had to employ a local resident just to find it.

"You stay here and watch for 'em," said Captain, "and we'll be back for you in a little while."

I was soon to learn exactly what "a little while" really meant.

My vigil began about two o'clock. I stood and surveyed the area for a time and listened for any sign of intruders, but didn't see or hear anything. About five o'clock, my stomach reminded me I hadn't had any lunch. Dusk fell and still no one came to relieve me. I had to have something to eat.

Luckily, it was the fall of the year, and the chinquapin oak acorns were ripe. I found me a tree, ate my fill of the acorns, and felt a lot better. Then I began to get thirsty. Now where to get water?

I walked down the hill and found a low place with a wet spot in the middle of it. With my hand I scooped a little pit and allowed it to fill with water that cleared in a few minutes. It really tasted good.

I trudged back to my hilltop and watched the full moon rise. I sat a while against a tree until the air grew chilly, then walked around some. Every now and then a coyote would howl in the distance. So far as I could tell, he and I had the woods to ourselves.

At dawn I breakfasted on acorns and took up my position on the hill again, but I didn't receive any company. Out of boredom I'd walk up and down the hill, occasionally snacking on the acorns and slaking my thirst at the little seep.

The day wore on. I thought, "They've forgotten me", but I didn't panic. I knew better than to try to walk out except as a

last resort. It was a long way to civilization.

About midnight of the second day I heard a car off in the distance. Pretty soon a couple of troopers emerged from the trees, accompanied by a local man who'd brought his bloodhounds to track the fugitives. One hound was young and the other older and more experienced. The owner handed me the leash to the older one. "You hold tight to that dog," he said. "If you let him free, he'll tear those guys to pieces!"

He took the young dog, with the intention of circling in the opposite direction, hoping to locate the fugitives' trail.

That old dog led me to a blackberry patch as big as a house. He stopped, sniffed, and started circling the patch. He went around twice, then stopped at a hole where some animal had dug an entrance for a den. He sniffed again and suddenly lunged for the hole. I couldn't hold him. He was a big, strong dog. I wasn't about to let him drag me into those thorns, so I let go. A few minutes passed. I didn't hear anything, nor did the dog reappear. I left and met the bloodhound man.

"Where's the dog?" he wanted to know.

"In the blackberry thicket. I couldn't hold him. Let him tear 'em to pieces if he wants to, but I don't think they're in there."

Our search was proving unsuccessful, so we decided to leave the area. This was about daylight and I reminded them that I hadn't eaten anything for 48 hours but chinquapin acorns and water.

At a cafe in Seligman I asked for a double order of ham and eggs. While they were frying, I called my wife, who was quite distraught. No one had called her to tell where I'd been for the past two days, so she wanted to hear everything. I explained as much as I could, but had to

break off when the food came. "I'll tell you the rest later," I told her. "I've got to eat."

The Missouri-North Arkansas railroad line ran through Seligman south to Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Somebody got the idea of putting an officer in the engine and another in the caboose and riding the train south, hoping the fugitives would hop the train and we could apprehend them that way. While riding along in the caboose, I glanced up on a hillside and there lay both of those bloodhounds fast asleep. They'd gotten as tired of the chase as we had.

The authorities caught the burglars several weeks later in Oklahoma. They hadn't even been out in those woods where we were searching. A partner had picked them up in a different car and they'd fled the area.

Every time I think of that incident, I remember how good those chinquapins tasted that second day.

It was April 13, 1933, that I experienced my baptism of fire, so to speak. Somebody had been pulling a lot of robberies in the area; suspicion pointed to the people living in a house on 34th Street in Joplin. Neighbors said the residents of the house had several cars, all with license plates from different states. They rarely left in the daytime, but were seen coming and going at odd hours in the night. Apparently, none of them worked.

The house was built of Carthage stone and had two stories, the upper one consisting of living quarters and the lower a garage large enough to park four cars inside. It sat right on the sidewalk, facing south on 34th Street and was the second house from the corner of 34th and Oak Ridge Drive. The corner house faced Oak Ridge Drive to the west. Neighbors said the occupants always backed two cars into the garage and another between the houses.

I had gone out to the house when the reports were first received and checked

the registration plate on the car parked outside. It checked to a person in Kansas on that car, so we didn't think too much more about it, as we had no direct evidence that they were involved in any criminal activity.

Then on April 12 the Neosho Milling Company was robbed. The proprietor, Harry Bacon and his wife were held captive while the robbers rifled the safe. The description of the robbers seemed to fit the folks in the house.

The next step was to secure a search warrant and investigate these people. Most of Joplin is in Jasper County, but the southern one-fourth, where the house was located, is in Newton County, so Trooper Walt Grammer and I went to Neosho, the county seat, where the prosecutor issued the warrant. Wes Harryman, the constable of the township accompanied us back to Joplin. He would serve the warrant, as the law didn't permit us to do it.

We stopped at the Joplin Police Station to make plans. We decided that Grammer and I would go in one car—it was Captain Eslick's Model A sedan—and Harryman and two Joplin detectives, Harry McGinnis and Tom Degraff would follow in the other. While the others served the warrant, Grammer and I were to check identification numbers on the car parked between the houses.

We didn't realize who we were dealing with. If we had, we'd have lined up a lot more help. The people in that house were Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow (better known as simply "Bonnie and Clyde"), Clyde's brother, Buck, and wife, Blanche, and W. D. Jones, all known to Texas law enforcement authorities as dangerous characters.

As I approached the house from the east on 34th Street, I noticed the Barrow brothers standing in front of the house. The garage doors were open. They had

evidently just arrived and were talking prior to entering their apartment.

"Step on it," said Grammer. "We'll get up there before they get inside."

So, I stepped on it, but of course those Model As didn't have much scat.

They looked up, saw us coming, and causally moved inside the garage, pulling the doors shut behind them. I drove right up to the garage entrance, and Grammer said, "Hey fellows, wait up, we want to talk to you."

That's when the shooting started. They opened up on us with rifles and shotguns. Luckily, Grammer and I weren't hit.

"Cover the back!" I shouted to Grammer. He ran around to the rear of the Barrow house and after firing a few rounds, I scrambled over behind the adjoining house out of the line of fire.

The police car was a short distance behind us. DeGraff was driving, with Harryman beside him, and McGinnis in the back seat. They should have been alerted to trouble by our quick exit, but instead of stopping down the street, they pulled right in beside the patrol car. Harryman climbed out and walked to the partially open garage doors. As he took his search warrant from his pocket, one of the Barrows shot him point blank in the chest with a sawed-off shotgun, killing him instantly.

DeGraff leaped out and ran around to the back with Grammer, as Harry McGinnis rolled from the passenger side and ran to the right-hand garage door. He smashed out the window and shoved his pistol inside. Before he could fire, one of the criminals shot him through the crack in the doors. The shotgun blast severed his right arm at the elbow. Slugs hit him in the face and body as well.



As I started to reload, I glanced up to see the muzzle of a machine gun protruding from behind the right-hand garage door. It was Clyde Barrow and he was firing at one of the fallen policemen. I aimed about where I judged his body to be and put two or three bullets through the door. He dropped the weapon and ran inside. At the time I thought I'd hit him, but found out later I'd only shot off his necktie!

There was a side window in the apartment. Just as I looked up to check it, W.D. Jones swung a Browning machine rifle out of the garage door and opened up. With the initial burst, I felt sharp pains in my face and neck. I thought, my God, half my head is gone. But the shells had hit the house, and I'd been struck by stone fragments blown free by the slugs.

I knew I had no chance against that kind of firepower with my little .38 pistol, so I ran around the house. He continued to fire, and how he missed, I'll never know. As I rounded the corner I tripped over a poultry wire that bordered a flowerbed and fell. As I rolled around the corner of the house, I saw Jones turn around.

"Where did the other son of a bitch go?" he said, meaning Grammer. Jones thought he'd killed me.

From about 25 feet away, I took careful aim and fired. The slug hit him just beneath the right shoulder blade. He fell back inside the garage.

This was the last cartridge in my revolver, so I ducked back down and began reloading. Suddenly, I heard someone coming around the opposite side of the house. Again I thought I'd had it, but it was only Walt Grammer.

"Get in that house and call for help!" I told him, and managed to load two shells in my gun. Meanwhile, the Barrows had

pitched the wounded W.D. Jones into one of the cars inside of the garage and, joined by Bonnie Parker and Blanche, started to drive out. The police car blocked the way, so Buck jumped out and released the brake. The car rolled down the street and struck a tree. DeGraff and I fired several rounds at their fleeing car, but to no avail.

This whole incident lasted only about one minute from the first shot to the final one. Constable Wes Harryman had been killed instantly and the Joplin police detective, Harry McGinnis, died that night.

In the apartment, we found an old Eastman Kodak camera with a roll of film inside. One of the shots was the now famous one of Bonnie Parker leaning on the headlight of a Model T Ford with her foot hiked up on the bumper, cigar in her mouth, and stag-handle pistol in her right hand. That pistol was stolen from Tom Persell, a Springfield policeman, whom the gang had kidnapped in January of 1933. He had been released unharmed.

On a table lay several sheets of black paper on which Bonnie Parker had been composing a poem, "Suicide Sal," in white ink. The poem only lacked a couple of lines before completion. She had evidently been writing when the shooting started, because the ink was still wet.

The gang had also left two of their cars, several pistols, and the Browning machine rifle that is now displayed at the Patrol Museum in Jefferson City.

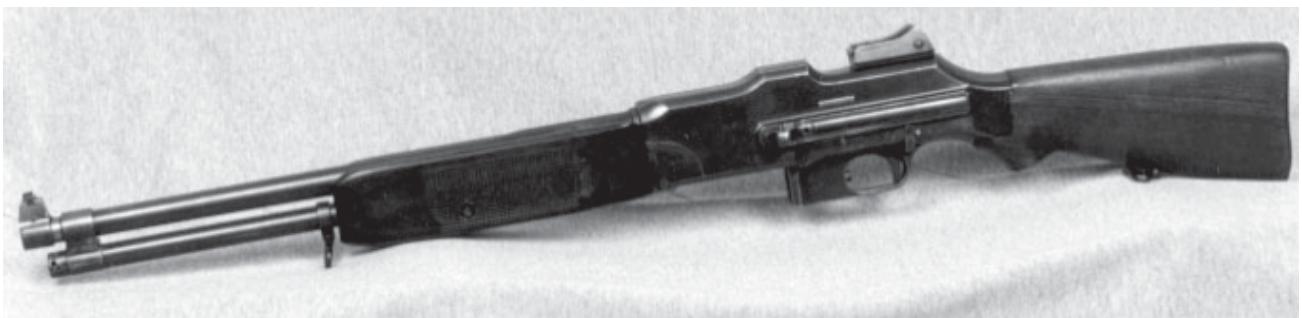
W.D. Jones left the gang in August of 1933, and was captured on his way back to Dallas. I later interviewed him in the penitentiary at Huntsville. By that time, Buck Barrow was dead from wounds suffered in another gun battle near Platte City, Missouri, and his wife, Blanche, had been caught in Iowa.

Jones showed me the scar left from my bullet. The place it exited his chest left a



*This now famous photo of Bonnie Parker shows her holding a pistol she took from a Springfield officer.*

*Pictured is Bonnie and Clyde's hideout in Joplin, Missouri.*



*Bonnie and Clyde's Browning rifle is on display in the Patrol's Safety Education Center.*

hole large enough to put your thumb into. The slug had passed completely through him but missed his vital organs. He said they'd stopped at a country store after fleeing Joplin and bought a little bottle of rubbing alcohol. Bonnie Parker pried open the wound with knitting needles and filled it with the alcohol. That was the only treatment he'd had!

Jones had been shot numerous times on other occasions. The backs of his hands

felt like beanbags from the buckshot embedded there. He had five buckshot in his lip, and one side of his face was full too. You could put your hand on it and feel the shot rolling around.

I saw an article in the newspaper a year or so ago saying that he'd finally been released from prison, but a short time afterwards somebody shot and killed him in a fight in a beer joint.



Clyde Barrow was impotent, you know. He kept W.D. Jones around to satisfy Bonnie. The authorities finally caught up with Bonnie and Clyde about a year after the Joplin gunfight and killed them in Louisiana.

Times were different then, not worse, just different. There are just as many trigger-happy thugs around now, but there were more of the big-time boys out and around in the 30s. In those days, Joplin was known as "The First Night Out," meaning it was about one day's drive from Chicago when things got too hot up there.

Ma Barker and her gang, made up of her sons and several other killers, would occasionally come to Joplin, but didn't stay long. Her husband lived there and ran a filling station on Seventh Street, but he wouldn't have anything to do with them. The same was true of his brother who resided in Webb City.

Jimmy Lawson, a former member of the Barker gang and a parolee from a Kansas penitentiary, started hanging around the Patrol headquarters in Joplin, more for self-protection than companionship, I think. One day I was sitting there minding the store—we didn't have a secretary and Sergeant Sayers was off duty—when Jimmy walked in and sat down. I was busy writing reports and wasn't paying much attention to him.

About 1 o'clock in the afternoon Grammer came in. Noticing that Jimmy looked a little pale, he said, "Jimmy, have you been getting enough to eat?"

Lawson didn't answer.

"Well, you had lunch, didn't you?" asked Grammer.

"No."

"Well, what did you have for breakfast?"

"Nothing."

"Why not?"

"I didn't have the money to buy anything with," he admitted.

Grammer reached in his pocket and pulled out a dollar bill. "There, go over to the restaurant and get yourself something to eat," he said. Grammer smiled, said so long to me, and left in his patrol car.

I finished my report a few minutes later and looked up to see Jimmy Lawson still sitting there. He was holding the dollar bill Grammer had given him and tears were rolling down both cheeks.

"What's the matter?" I said.

"I was just thinking how near I come to killin' him one time. And here he's givin' me money to eat on."

"How's that?"

"Several years ago, me and the boys had been up in Iowa and pulled a job or two and the law was after us. We was tryin' to get home on the side roads. Just beyond Saginaw (southeast of Joplin) Grammer pulled up behind us in his patrol car. We had the taillights cut off so nobody could read the license plates. He stopped us.

"The minute we stopped, I rolled out of the right side with a sawed-off shotgun. If he'd started to search us or even shined his flashlight inside, I'd have killed him right there. Hell, I wasn't over 10 feet away. But all he said was, "Stop at the next station and get your taillight fixed." Then he turned around and went back to his car, and we drove off.

"Now, here I haven't had anything to eat since noon yesterday, and the man I would have killed gives me money for a meal."

The next time I saw Grammer, I told him what Lawson had said. He didn't even remember stopping the car.

In 1934, I was promoted to sergeant and transferred to Springfield. I hadn't been there long when a circus came to town. They were unloading tents and animal cages from railroad cars and hauling them on big trucks to the circus grounds, a vacant lot at St. Louis Street and Glenstone Avenue. The trucks had bad brakes, so I was directing traffic at the intersection, stopping the traffic on Glenstone to let the circus trucks get across to the grounds.

Things were going pretty well when along came a guy in a car on Glenstone. He was really flying. A circus truck was coming toward us and it couldn't stop. I finally got the automobile driver's attention and after a near collision, he pulled to the shoulder. He began to cuss me. He said he was in a hurry. I told him to wait right there until I could get traffic unsnarled, because I wanted to talk to him. Then, he gunned his engine and started to leave. I ran back over and stopped him again. Because he was so nervous and acting peculiarly, I decided I'd better restrain him till I could question him further. But right then, I had to see that those circus trucks got through the intersection without mishap.

So, I handcuffed him to the car door. He didn't like that, but he soon shut up and I went back to directing traffic. When I returned 15 or 20 minutes later, he'd cooled down and he apologized. He said he'd been hasty and hadn't understood the situation. He lived there in Springfield and was otherwise a law-abiding citizen.

But, that wasn't the end of it. The fellow got to reflecting about the situation and decided to write a complaint to Colonel Casteel. He also hired a prominent attorney, Sam Ware, and created a big stink over the thing.

The Patrol held an investigation and decided to bust me from sergeant to trooper and transfer me back to Joplin. I was glad to return, but not under those circumstances.

I learned later that a number of Springfield citizens had made a pilgrimage to Jefferson City to plead in my behalf, but the decision stood. My mistake was not taking the man to jail in the beginning and letting someone else watch those trucks.

It's funny how stories grow with the telling. When I was stationed in Springfield in the early '40s, a fellow broke jail in Warsaw, stole a machine gun, killed the sheriff, and fled to the woods of Benton and Henry counties. Several state troopers were assisting the local officers in the manhunt. After three days of following up reported sightings with no success, our men were worn out. Chester Oliver, who was sergeant over at Nevada then, and I decided we'd better go up and relieve them.

We were discussing our strategy when a man walked up and reported that the fugitive had been seen walking by a big haystack on Highway 7 about 10 miles west of Clinton.

Sure enough, we found tracks around the haystack, leading across the field toward a creek. A home sat on the other side.

"I'll go down to that house and ask if they've seen him," said Oliver.

"OK, I'll wait there by the creek," I said.

The man and wife in the house told Chester that a guy had been by there a few minutes ago. He'd gotten a drink of water and gone on up the creek.

"He's just ahead of us," yelled Oliver across the creek. "you go down that side and I'll circle out into this field and see if I can get ahead of him."

I walked along the stream, checking occasional thickets. I hadn't gone far when I saw the escapee coming back toward me on the opposite bank. The creek was narrow, only about 12 or 15 feet wide, but right there the banks were six or seven feet high and very steep, so I couldn't cross. I crouched down so he wouldn't see me.

When he was directly opposite my position, I raised up and told him to get his hands up and to turn his back to me. Keeping an eye on him, I quickly found a place where I could get across. He offered no resistance as I handcuffed him.

Then I heard Chester Oliver hollering from the top of a dirt pile he'd climbed to get a better view of the terrain. "I don't see him! Are you doing any good?"

"I've got him!" I yelled back. "Come on down!"

We took him back to Warsaw.

A few months later the story of the manhunt and capture was featured in a detective magazine. I had a copy for a long time, but I loaned it to somebody and it got away. The author must have found the facts as reported to be too dull, so he embellished the event somewhat.

He described the terrain as "rugged Ozark Mountains, slashed by deep ravines, and covered with mammoth trees and impenetrable undergrowth" through which Chester and I trailed the murderer for miles. According to the author, I then spotted the fellow and pointed him out to Chester, who grabbed hold of a wild grapevine and swung down Tarzan-style, landing on the fellow's shoulders. A terrific battle then ensued with Oliver finally emerging the winner.

Every now and then when I see Chester Oliver, I think of that story and ask him, "Have you been swinging on any grapevines lately?"

I was stationed in Springfield until 1955, when I moved to Troop G at Willow Springs. I served there until my retirement in 1965.

Church work has filled much of my time since I left the Patrol. In 1965, I was elected moderator of the Missouri Synod of the United Presbyterian Church. The following year I was chairman of the Synod General Council, and in 1967 chairman of the Executive Committee of the Synod.

In 1967, the church decided to consolidate the synods. Until then, they had been divided by states. I was elected as one of the Synod's representatives on the Reorganizing Commission and served until the work was completed in 1973. Since then I have been chairman of Presbytery's Personnel Committee and a member of Presbytery's General Council.

My wife and I have a son and a daughter, both married and residing in Florida. Our son has a boy aged 7 and a girl aged 4. We spend a month or two each winter visiting them and enjoying the sunshine.

(Note: This interview took place in 1980. Retired Lieutenant George B. Kahler died in 1993)

# THOMAS E. “TOM” WHITECOTTON

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*In the spring of 1980, the new police station in Jefferson City was named for Tom Whitecotton, in tribute to his service to the public as a highway patrolman, penal administrator, and city councilman. Certainly he has led a busy, exciting life. A member of the Patrol's original 1931 Recruit Class, Tom relates his experiences in quite, thoughtful tones, but beneath the gentle smile, one senses an iron resolve, a man who can make a decision.*

Yes, in April of 1980, I plan to retire for the third time. I've served the public for over 50 years, two as a schoolteacher, 34 as a highway patrolman, 7 1/2 in the Missouri Department of Revenue, and the past eight on the city council of Jefferson City.

Funny thing about retirement. Everybody dreams of doing as he pleases. I remember asking Dave Harrison, a former superintendent of the Patrol, what he planned to do after he retired. "Nothin'!" he assured me. For awhile that idea seemed appealing, but as the day approached for me to leave the Patrol, I realized that old saying is true. "When a man reaches the point where he can do what he's always wanted to do, he doesn't want to do it anymore."

I thought I'd work part time, to sort of taper off, but part-time work was scarce. I was still looking when I was attending my last motor vehicle administrator's meeting in Florida in late 1965. John Paden, then the supervisor of the Commercial Vehicle Section of the Department of Revenue, was there. "Had any luck finding a job?" he asked.

"None yet," I told him.



*Thomas E. Whitecotton, shown here as a sergeant.*

"If you want full-time work, come and see us," he said.

So, I had a talk with Tom David, the director of the Revenue Department. "When can you go to work?" he asked.

"Not before Monday," I said. (This was on the preceding Thursday.)

So, I went back to work. I stayed there 7 1/2 years and held three or four positions under three directors: Tom David, Jim Schaffner, and Jim Spradling. I was in charge of all the license fee offices in the state when I retired from the Revenue Department in March of 1973. Christopher Bond was governor then.

A month later, I ran for the city council, and I've served there ever since. My latest term ends in April of 1980, and I plan to

retire permanently then—well, maybe. You never can tell what may happen.

Believe it or not, these past eight years I've been busier than when I had a full-time job. Besides my council duties, I help my son manage a farm. The last several years of my Patrol career, I was stationed at General Headquarters, so my hours were regular eight to five, with weekends off, but it wasn't always that way.

In 1931, Patrol officers were required to work 12-hour shifts, with only three days off a month. If a court case was scheduled on your off day, that was too bad. They tried to give us a weekend off each quarter, but it wasn't always possible. Those 12-hour shifts often stretched to 14 or 16, or sometimes 24 hours. If you were involved in a manhunt, you might be out for days. They just left you out there until the criminal was captured or until it was determined he got away. I remember two manhunts in particular, both for slayers of Missouri highway patrolmen.

When Sergeant Ben Booth was murdered in 1933 near Columbia, we searched Callaway County for two days and nights without success. They did catch the men involved later on, though. George McKeever was hanged in 1936, and Francis McNeily was paroled while I was director of penal institutions in the late '40s.

In 1941, Trooper Fred Walker died at the hands of two boys he'd stopped in a stolen car north of Bloomsdale in Jefferson County. They took his pistol, shot him, and fled in the patrol car, only to be apprehended the following day in Perryville.

We wore those knee-length boots then. After a day of walking in the fields and woods, your feet itched and burned so bad you couldn't wait to get those boots off.

But, I'm getting ahead of my story. Let's back up to 1927 when I graduated from high school with a teaching certificate. For

two years I taught at a rural school house in Monroe County, and tried to live on the paltry \$65 to \$70 salary they paid me each month. I just couldn't make it. So, I decided to go to St. Louis, get a job to earn some money, and eventually attend law school. I applied at the police department for a job answering the telephone in the evening. A lot of the fellows worked there and attended Washington University in the daytime. But, that didn't pan out, and I wound up working at various places: service stations, the Ambassador Theater, and the 1929 Grand Assembly of Law-makers as a clerk.

In 1931, the Missouri Legislature created the Highway Patrol. I, along with 5,000 other guys, took the examination, and I made it.

Our training started October 5, 1931, and lasted about a month. Following about two weeks of vacation, we were told to report to our assigned stations with our vehicles. My station was Troop A, which had its headquarters in the Missouri Highway Department building on 31st Street in Kansas City. My "vehicle" really couldn't properly be called a vehicle. It was an Indian motorcycle. If a more awkward, uncomfortable machine has ever been built, I'd like to see it. You sat up too high on the things and their road-handling characteristics were terrible—if you could get them started, which was seldom. I don't know how many years I kept that Indian, but I know one thing: It was too long!

The most unusual duty we drew on the motorcycles was escorting Governor Lloyd Stark, who served as chief executive of Missouri from 1936 to 1941. Stark and Tom Pendergast, a political boss in Kansas City, carried on a running feud throughout most of Stark's term in office. The governor was afraid Pendergast would have him assassinated, so Stark kept himself surrounded by highway patrolmen constantly.



Whenever Stark traveled from Jefferson City to Kansas City, he'd have a patrolman chauffeuring and two more in the back seat of his limousine. Two motorcycle officers would meet him at Lone Jack on U.S. Highway 50 and escort him the remaining 30 miles to Kansas City, regardless of the temperature or weather. If we'd take him to Union Station to catch a train, we'd have to shield him with our bodies to protect him from bullets that never came.

We always thought how silly the whole thing was. Pendergast would never have harmed Stark in Kansas City, because Pendergast would have been blamed for it. He supposedly had control of most of the hoodlums, and I could imagine him issuing orders to them, "Go home and stay there, and hide your weapons. Lloyd Stark is coming to town."

Many's the time I met him at Lone Jack in bitterly cold weather, escorted him west through Lee's Summit, finally reaching the Muehlebach Hotel in downtown Kansas City. When I climbed off my cycle, I couldn't tell if my feet were touching the ground or up in the air, they were so numb. That's the kind of thing you can look back on 45 years later and laugh about.

In the early '30s, there weren't many traffic laws, so when you caught someone driving crazy, you had to take him before the justice of the peace—who knew nothing about the law and didn't care to learn—and convince the justice that the driver deserved punishment for reckless driving. If you were persuasive enough, justice was serviced. From a legal standpoint it stunk.

Jackson County was very political then. You'd take a guy to post bond and he'd be released on his own recognizance, and you knew the fellow would never appear in court, because he was a friend of a friend. I got tired of going to court only to

learn that the charges had been dropped. Russ Gabriel was the prosecutor for eastern Jackson County, and I finally asked him, "Would you do me a favor? When I bring in somebody, and you know the charge will be kicked, let me know right then. I'll write it up that way, and it'll save us a lot of time." Russ said he would.

One day, he and I were driving to Blue Springs to hold court and came upon a female drunken driver. She stopped in response to my signal, but when I walked up to the car, she came out fighting and clawed me across the face. I belted her one right in the jaw. She quieted down and we took her to jail.

"Tom," said Russ, "I'll stick by you on that bitch."

"Well, I hope you do," I said.

Naturally, her appearance dates in court were delayed several times 'til finally Russ called me. "Tom, I'm going to have to kick that case of the drunk woman."

"That's OK," I said. "I got my satisfaction out there on the highway."

Crude as they were, our efforts did bring about improvements in laws and legal procedures, and I'm convinced that the Highway Patrol was a positive force in making the highways safer. There are more fatalities now, but per capita there are far fewer, and there are many more vehicles on the highways today.

You hear a lot of wild talks about the gunfight between law officers and Bonnie and Clyde near Platte City on July 20, 1933. Well, I participated, so I'll add my version.

We had no two-way radios in our patrol cars then, so when the troop headquarters had a message for us, they'd phone restaurants where we made regular stops.



*Shown are notorious gangsters Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, 1933.*

The Red Crown Tavern near Platte City was one of these stopping places. They served good food and a lot of the boys ate there. The owner also had several tourist cabins next to the restaurant.

Word came to our office that three men and two women had rented two of the cabins and were acting suspicious. They never set foot in the Red Crown, but would instead send one man to the restaurant across the highway for carryout meals. When a license check on their car revealed that it had been stolen in Oklahoma from a doctor and his girlfriend, we knew we had some hot customers.

Captain Baxter, the commanding officer of Troop A, Trooper Leonard Ellis, and I drove to the scene, arriving about 11 o'clock on the night of July 19. I'd been working in the office all day and was wearing a seersucker suit and a Panama hat instead of my uniform. We met the Platte

County Sheriff, Holt Coffey, and several deputies. Holt had asked Sheriff Tom Bash of Jackson County to bring his armored car and a few of his deputies, too.

The cabins were connected by a double car garage. Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were in one cabin, and Blanch and Buck Barrow and W.D. Jones were in the other. We stationed two Platte County deputies on top of the Red Crown Tavern. The armored car, with two Jackson County men inside, was parked in the driveway, blocking the only escape route. A deputy and I were set up at the end of the driveway as backup, and the rest of the officers were arranged strategically around the cabins.

At 1 a.m., Baxter and Coffey, carrying machine guns and protected by armored shields, walked to the door of Bonnie and Clyde's cabin and knocked.

"Who's there?" asked Clyde.

"The sheriff. Open up!" said Coffey.

"Just a minute," said Clyde, reaching for his 30.06 machine rifle. He blasted several rounds right through the closed door.

Baxter staggered backward, unhurt and still holding his gun and shield, but Holt Coffey ran for cover. You really couldn't blame him with those slugs flying around. In the uncertain light, I mistook him for one of the gang members. I ran after him and yelled at Leonard Ellis, who was closer to the cabins, "There's one of 'em! Get him!"

And, he did, too! Fortunately, Holt only received a superficial buckshot wound to the neck. He believed 'til his dying day that Clyde Barrow shot him, but it was actually a state trooper.

Bonnie and Clyde could reach the gang's car by an interior door, but Buck,



Blanche, and Jones had to come out the front. When they did, Captain Baxter opened up with his machine gun, hitting Buck in the head. He stumbled to the car with Blanche's help, and with Clyde at the wheel, they roared out of the garage. The hail of bullets from both sides was terrific. I hit the dirt, seersucker suit and all. Bullets whizzed overhead for a few seconds, then stopped. I guess they thought they'd hit me. Jones and Clyde concentrated their fire on the armored car, which blocked the exit, and one slug actually penetrated the armor, slightly wounding one of the deputies.

If the lawmen had left that armored car where it was, the gang would never have escaped, but the deputies panicked and moved it out of the way. Clyde zipped the car through the opening. At the end of the road where I had been standing before I mistakenly chased Sheriff Coffey, the deputy fired and shattered a pane, blinding Blanche, but the way was clear now and the Barrow gang escaped. Several of the lawmen were wounded, but none seriously.

Only a day or two later, the Barrows engaged in another gunfight with officers in Iowa. Buck was killed and Blanche was captured. Jones left Bonnie and Clyde a few months afterwards, only to be apprehended and returned to Dallas to face multiple charges. I understand he turned state's evidence on Bonnie and Clyde, claiming they'd forced him to participate in robberies and killings, but he received a long prison sentence anyway. Bonnie and Clyde were killed a few months later in Louisiana.

Not too long after the Bonnie and Clyde shootout, I had another interesting experience. It, too, occurred near Platte City. Two boys had left a service station without paying for gas. A sheriff's deputy spotted them and gave chase in his car. The boys finally ran their car into the ditch, jumped

out, and fled into the woods. Two or three of us drove up to assist the sheriff's men. We split up into small groups and started searching the woods near the Platte River. Before long we came upon a house that appeared to be abandoned. The sheriff assured me no one lived there. "We'd better take a look inside," I said.

The front door was locked. I walked around to the side door. A stoop had been there, but it had been removed, so the bottom of the door was about two feet above the ground. I pushed on the door, but it wouldn't budge. I backed off and kicked it open. The door hit something and bounced back almost shut.

Through the crack came the muzzle of a shotgun, pointed directly at my head. I was carrying a riot gun and instinctively jerked it up and fired. The guy inside screamed, dropping his shotgun and slammed the door again.

We yelled at him to come out, but received no response. We fired several tear gas shells into the house and then went in. Under a bed we found the fellow I'd shot, an old gentleman who had been living in the house. He had no connection with the two boys we were searching for.

The shotgun blast had only grazed the skin on the top of his head. We took him to the doctor, who patched him up and sent him on his way. I often look back on that incident and think how lucky both of us were. The old fellow could have easily killed me or I him, an innocent, frightened man.

I sometimes reflect back on those occurrences and similar ones and think, if only I had it to do over, I'd do it differently, but, maybe not. Luckily, you do the right thing most of the time, so you don't really have many regrets. It's funny how something you say or the way you say it can change a situation, bring about positive results.

One night back in the '30s Troopers Jim Judkins and Herb Brigham had caught a couple of thieves and were interrogating them in the troop headquarters. Their questions had elicited only lies, so Jim and Herb had gotten a little physical with them. The suspects still wouldn't talk.

They were there when I reported for work the following morning. "What's the matter?" I asked Herb, whose temper was wearing thin.

"Oh, these sons of bitches won't talk," he sputtered.

I turned to one of the thieves and said, "What's the matter with you, fellow? Why don't you tell the officer what he wants to know and get it over with?"

That guy looked at me and sighed, and told everything. It was crazy. I don't know yet why he decided to talk after holding out all night.

Words aren't always enough, though. Sometimes, a little physical coercion can work wonders. In 1934, Trooper Chester Oliver was kidnapped. His captors didn't harm him, but they did take him for a wild ride. After their capture, Trooper Herbert H. "Pappy" Holt brought them into our office for interrogation. Colonel B. Marvin Casteel, the Patrol superintendent, was questioning one of them, with the help of Captain Baxter and several other officers. I was facing Casteel and standing behind the young suspect, who wouldn't tell Casteel anything. I listened to that awhile and finally I saw red. I hauled off and whopped that boy on the side of the head with my open hand. It sounded like a pistol shot.

The Colonel nearly swallowed his pipe. "Now, son ... son," he stammered, "y-y-you better start telling the truth!"

I thought possibly the next thing he'd say was, "Whitecotton, you're fired!" But, he didn't. Maybe he was too startled. But,

the boy gave us straight answers after that.

I spent 11 1/2 years in Troop A, mostly in Lee's Summit, but in 1942, Superintendent M. Stanley Ginn transferred me to Troop C at Kirkwood, near St. Louis. I had just built a home on O'Brien Road in Lee's Summit and was reluctant to sell right away, thinking the transfer might be temporary. I'd had two short assignments in Bethany and Sedalia earlier. Two other patrolmen, Jim Judkins and Herb Brigham had built houses near ours. "I think I'll wait," I told everybody. "I may be back before long."

But, time passed and when Captain Lewis Howard joined the Merchant Marines, I was promoted from troop sergeant to captain. I was there until 1944 and really enjoyed working with the officers. We had fun, but we got the job done, too.

The guy I remember best was Trooper J.D. Chorn (pronounced *corn*). What a character. He'd cook up some of the craziest practical jokes—nothing malicious, just funny stuff.

J.D. was forever scaring our custodian, Virgil. One morning Chorn rigged up some long Dracula fangs out of paper. Then, he scrounged an old bed sheet from somewhere, went down to the basement, lay down on a table, covered himself with the sheet, and waited for Virgil.

When the custodian came in to sweep, J.D. raised up very slowly, letting the sheet slide down to reveal his bulging eyes and protruding fangs. Virgil shrieked, threw away his broom, and tore up the steps and out of the building as fast as he could go.

I didn't know anything about the prank, and along about noon, I was sitting in my office talking to somebody, when I looked up and there was Virgil staring in my window from the outside. His eyes were wild. I had a heck of a time coaxing him back inside.

"What's the matter, Virgil?" I asked.

"Captain Whitecotton, I like these men, but they're scaring me to death."

I didn't want to lose Virgil, so I told J.D. to tone down his antics a little.

Chorn has his own lie detector machine. That's right; he designed and built it himself. He'd bring in a criminal suspect and interrogate him. If J.D. thought the guy was lying, he'd ask him to submit to a test on the machine. Of course, it wasn't a real polygraph, just a metal box with a lot of dials, meters, lights, and attachments that didn't measure anything. J.D. would hook the guy up to the contraption, and when the suspect gave a wrong answer, Chorn would hit a switch and make the lights flash on the lie detector.

"You're lying," he'd say. "The machine says so." Nine times out of 10, the suspect would confess his crime.

In 1944, I transferred to General Headquarters in Jefferson City. In the spring of



*Trooper J.D. Chorn*

1945, Governor Phil Donnelly asked me to take over as acting warden of the Missouri Penitentiary. "It'll only be for a month or so," he told me. "I don't know a thing about being a warden," I said, "but, I'll do the best I can." I took a leave of absence from the Patrol and became the prison warden.

The one month stretched to six, the governor asked me to stay on as director of the Department of Penal Institutions. I served there until Governor Forrest Smith

*Tom E. Whitecotton (foreground, suit) listens as Colonel E.I. "Mike" Hockaday and Warden Ralph Eidson make plans to stop the 1954 Missouri Penitentiary Riot.*



replaced me in July of 1949. Following a month's vacation, I returned to the Patrol.

Between 1949 and 1952 I was stationed at Troop B in Macon and Troop I in Rolla. In fact, I was the first commanding officer Troop I ever had. It wasn't formed until 1950. My wife and I liked Rolla very much and made a lot of friends there.

Governor Donnelly was re-elected in 1952, and I went back to the penitentiary as director. Well, in September of 1954 there was a major prison riot, and I decided to let someone else take over.

I was reassigned to General Headquarters and placed in charge of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Section, which enforced bus and truck statutes. I liked this job because I could travel all over the state. I had a fine bunch of sergeants and weight inspectors to do my work for me. I held this position until I retired in 1965.

Looking back to my days as a warden, I can't help thinking about my most unpleasant duty: performing executions of condemned criminals. I believe there were 10 performed during my two terms, two of which were double executions.

One of those doubles involved Carl Austin Hall and Bonnie Brown Heady, who on September 28, 1953, kidnapped Bobby Greenlease, the young son of a prominent Kansas City car dealer. They collected a large ransom, but murdered the child. They were captured soon thereafter, and following a speedy trial, were condemned to die in the gas chamber on December 19, 1953.

Ralph Eidson was the warden then. As he placed his hand on the lever that released the cyanide pellets, I put my hand on top of his. He looked at me questioningly. "I wouldn't ask you to do anything I wouldn't do," I said, and we pulled the lever together.

Someone asked me at the time, "How do you feel when you take another person's life?"

"You try to have no feelings about it at all," I answered. "You don't hate the condemned person, nor do you love him, or feel sorry for him. His fate has been decided by the courts and it is your duty to carry out the sentence."

"But, haven't there been any executions that really got to you?" came the next question.

"Yes, one. He was an elderly black man who had committed a rape and murder. His cries and pleadings of 'Don't kill me, I ain't never hurt nobody' were heart-rendering indeed, but I had no choice in the matter.

Police and corrections work are different from most professions, because a lot of the time we deal with the bad side of life. Seems like we tend to forget the pleasant things and remember the unpleasant. Don't get the idea though that I haven't enjoyed my life with the Patrol, corrections, revenue departments, and city council. Public life has been rewarding, but I don't intend to run for office again. When my last day on the council has ended and I'm really retired, I hope I don't get involved in anything else—but, I probably will.

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Captain Thomas E. Whitecotton died June 30, 1987.)*



# HERBERT D. “HERB” BRIGHAM

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*Herb Brigham was an imposing sight in uniform and today, in his seventies, still impresses one as a powerfully built man. A part-time instructor of Patrol recruits for years, Herb's 29-year career included duty on road patrol and in the Auto Theft Unit at General Headquarters. He will forever be remembered as the leader of the successful counterattack against the rioting inmates at the Missouri State Penitentiary the evening of September 22, 1954. Herb recalls that night along with other exciting incidents in this account.*

“While I was in the Army in 1928 near Rapid City, South Dakota, I read in the *Denver Post* that an attempt was being made by the Missouri Legislature to form a state constabulary. The bill didn't pass then, but in 1931 they did create the Missouri State Highway Patrol. When I returned to Missouri, I applied to Superintendent Lewis Ellis, and was appointed April 4, 1932.

My badge number was 53, a replacement number for an original member who had been discharged. My training, which



*Tpr. Herbert D. Brigham, est. 1932*

lasted two weeks, was under the direction of Sergeant (later Captain) Lewis B. Howard at the Capitol building. I was given reading assignments in traffic and Public Service Commission regulations, and criminal law. Believe it or not, I passed my exams by memorizing everything they gave me!

My first assignment was in the Headquarters Troop, there being no Troop F then. The commanding officer was Lewis Means and we had two secretaries, Tillie Sonnen and Rose Bender. At that time there was no records division, no finger-



*Shown is the Patrol's Safety Squadron, early 1940s.*

print division, and, of course, there were no radios in the cars, so most of our orders came by phone.

We had no heaters in our Model A roadster patrol cars, but then, they wouldn't have been of much use, anyway, because we were ordered to patrol with the tops down — except in inclement weather when we were allowed to use side curtains. I guess you could say that our entire fleet was air-conditioned. You might wonder what we thought about patrolling in open cars. Well, it was for a good cause. We were visible to the public and it wasn't too bad. Speeds were much lower then; 35 mph was the average for patrolling. Our cars had no sirens and no red lights, but we did have a lighted sign on the dash, which spelled out "Patrol" when we wanted to stop somebody. And, we used hand signals.

My area of patrol was down U.S. Highway 54 through the Lake of the Ozarks region, and much of the route was gravel. You can imagine what my uniform looked like at the end of the day. At that time, there were only about 6,000 miles of paved roads in the state.

We had good acceptance from the public. From the very first we were trained to be helpful. This was brought home to me one day in court when I was to testify on a bank robbery. This would have been in the mid 1930s. I was then stationed in Lee's Summit. Along about Christmastime Trooper Paul Corl and I received a phone call from Troop A Headquarters saying that the bank at Lone Jack had been held up by three men in a 1932 Chevrolet convertible. We drove south from Grain Valley and met them coming off a side road. They stopped about a quarter mile away and two of them jumped over a fence and fled through a field. The third fell in the ditch. When we got to the car we found that the fellow in the ditch had been shot accidentally in the foot by one of his com-

panions. Well he wasn't going anywhere, so we took after the others. I overhauled one and handcuffed him. The other escaped, but was caught by sheriff's deputies later. The entire haul — \$800 — was recovered.

When the prosecuting attorney of Jackson County, T.A. Matheson, called us to testify, he didn't want to hear what we had to say until he told a story of his own. It seems that the prosecutor was tremendously impressed with the actions of one of our officers who had changed a tire for his wife and daughter while they were en route to a football game at Columbia. So you see, it pays to be helpful.

When I first moved to Troop A, our headquarters was in the basement of the Highway Department building at 31st and Van Brunt. I was assigned an Indian motorcycle, but patrolled in a car occasionally. It was a relief to get off that motorcycle once in a while. We rode them in inclement weather. You haven't lived until you've ridden a motorcycle in deep snow. But we were dressed for it — leather coats, gauntlets, high-topped boots, and helmets with goggles like World War I aviators wore. We needed those because the cycles didn't have windshields. Later on when we did get them, along with leg shields, patrolling was much more comfortable.

The fortunate among us rode Harley-Davidsons. They were the ultimate in motorcycles then. They'd run about 115 mph and were very stable. We did have a few accidents; got skinned up a bit. Skin'd grow back, but when you ruined a pair of boots or trousers, it was expensive.

That reminds me of an incident that occurred about 1938. Trooper Jim Judkins and I were escorting a military convoy on our motorcycles across Missouri on Highway 36 from Fort Leavenworth to the Illinois line. The convoy was composed mainly of prime movers, large vehicles ca-

pable of hauling tanks. We had been traveling at 28 mph with the vehicles spaced about 50 yards apart. At a junction, Judkins told me his engine was fouling up because of the low speed, and that he'd hang back and run it a little to clear it out. I didn't see him for a while.

Later as the convoy topped a hill, I noticed an Army rider pulling back into line because of oncoming traffic. At the same time, I heard rubber squalling. I thought it was the Army man, but no, it was Jim Judkins. Coming up from the rear he had lost control of his cycle and was veering toward me. His left handlebar hooked under my right one and onto the shoulder we went. When we hit, we were propelled off the bikes and over a fence. I finally got up and noticed that the seat of Jim's pants were badly worn. In fact, all I would see was his rear pocket hanging free, commission book still in it, and bare skin. I



*Herb Brigham was a member of the Patrol's pistol team for several years. He also taught firearms to a number of recruit classes.*

started laughing, but soon quit because I began to hurt. I had dislocated my shoulder. Up rolled the Army ambulance that traveled at the rear of the column. The doctor sat me down, placed his foot against my armpit and jerked my shoulder back in place. Not too pleasant an experience, I can assure you.

My wife Dorothy was pregnant when this happened, and it fell on Sergeant Tom Whitecotton to deliver the news of the accident to her. He didn't want to alarm her, so he told her this way: "Nothing to worry about, Dorothy, Jim just tried to ride his motorcycle piggyback on top of Herb's."

Most of our reports measured three inches by five inches, all color-coded. Warnings were blue and services rendered reports, orange. I remember one of those orange ones turned in by an officer stationed in Hamilton. It read, "Drug farmer's ass off highway." It seems he'd found a mule on the road and removed the animal.

We worked 12-hour shifts, usually from 11 a.m. until 11 p.m.; nowadays those hours seem a bit long, but we were young and eager to do our jobs. Traffic control was our main objective, but I was always more interested in catching thieves—especially car thieves. Though I don't have the figures to verify it, I'd say I averaged three apprehensions a month. My interest in car thefts continued throughout my career. In 1954, when I was in General Headquarters, I authored an auto theft investigator's manual, which was printed by the University of Missouri and disseminated to police agencies throughout the United States. Martha Barnes, now the superintendent's secretary, typed the manuscript.

I still have an original copy, along with many letters from police chiefs and state police superintendents commending Colonel Waggoner. I'm quite proud of this manual, and justifiably so, for I believe



*Herb Brigham rides his Safety Squadron motorcycle, early '40s.*



*Pictured is the original Safety Squadron, 1940, left to right: (front) M. Dace, R.E. Moore, W.A. Schuler; (back) H.D. Brigham, T.W. Pasley, J.A. Berglund, L.V. Estes, E.C. Smith, R.G. Breid, G.T. McIntyre, L.E. Poore, C.E. Potts, G.W. Lampley.*



nothing had ever been printed like this before. The book discussed techniques of investigation and described ways in which automobiles were being stolen and disposed of. That same year, 1954, I was elected president of the International Association of Automobile Theft Investigators, an organization of which I am a charter member and which has grown enormously in later years.

Do I remember any particular car thief apprehensions? Yes, many, but since you have limited space, I'll tell only this one that dates back to the '30s.

I was driving down Highway 50 at Knobtown, 12 miles east of Kansas City. A Model A coupe containing two men met me. It had a California license plate and I noticed in my rear-view mirror that after they'd passed, they kept looking at me. I also noted that the spare tire, usually mounted on the trunk, was missing. I turned around and stopped them and asked for identification and the registra-

tion receipt. The car belonged to a person who lived on Figueroa Street in Los Angeles. I asked their names and where they were from. They gave all the wrong answers. They'd hocked the spare tire in Kansas, they said. I was suspicious, to say the least, so I asked them, matter-of-factly, "Where did you steal this car?" And they told me—everything! It wasn't often that car thieves were so cooperative.

Bootleggers were active in those days, too. One night Trooper H.H. "Pappy" Holt and I were driving north on Highway 35 from Harrisonville and spotted a coupe with Kansas plates. The rear of the car was low, indicating that there was a heavy load aboard. When we got the car stopped, we looked in and there was the driver with the front seat pushed up so far forward, his chest was against the steering wheel. That allowed him to carry more cargo. He had a woman with him. They had the back loaded with something covered by brown paper. We didn't have the

right of search and seizure, except for weapons, so I asked him what he was hauling. "Liquid soap," came the answer. Liquid maybe, but soap, I doubted. We took them to Lee's Summit and called the federal authorities, and when they opened one of the containers they found that the "soap" had a high alcohol content and would have been more suitable for drinking than washing.

One evening in 1937 Jim Judkins and I saw a 1936 Buick bearing Missouri license plate 3620—yes, I still remember the number—going north on U.S. 71, south of Kansas City. We knew the car belonged to Johnny Vittorino, a known warehouse thief. We took off in pursuit in our 1937 Ford patrol car with our lights out. We knew we'd never catch that big Buick if he spotted us. As we approached Fairyland Park, we signaled the driver to stop. He tried to outrun us, but couldn't get away. Johnny Vittorino was driving, accompanied by Sam Harris and Jimmie George, also thieves. These fellows must have had 50 arrests between them. In the back seat I could see stacks of fur coats on hangers, on which was printed, "Three Sisters, Springfield, Missouri," a clothing store.

I asked them, "Do you have a gun?"

"In the glove compartment," said one, so I reached in and took it.

I guarded Vittorino and George while Judkins interrogated Harris by the patrol car. I suddenly became aware of a flurry of activity back there. I went to see what was going on and found Jim holding Harris' glasses and Harris holding his head. I asked what had happened.

Jim replied, "He offered me \$50 to turn him loose." Jim was highly incensed. We

were men of integrity and could not be bribed.

So, I asked Harris, "Did you offer him \$50?" And he said, "Yes." But, he misinterpreted, thinking that I might be interested in his offer. Why, I was so damned provoked, I hit him, too. Brought a little blood, as I remember it.

This had repercussions. Later Judkins and I were called to Springfield to testify on behalf of the state at the trial of the fur thieves. The defendants were represented by three prominent attorneys, a Mr. Vandeventer, later a U.S. District Attorney, and two others of like stature.

On the witness stand, they asked me, "Did you hit Sam Harris?" And I replied, "Yes, I did,"—not arrogantly, but honestly. No use lying about it. The attorney asked why. And I said, "Because he offered me \$50 to let him go." I was immediately released from further testimony. Johnny Vittorino received a seven-year prison sentence; Harris and George, a four-year sentence each.

One of the craziest adventures I ever had was the time I helped prevent the lynching of two Jehovah Witnesses. It was in 1945, if my memory serves me correctly. Pappy Holt, working the desk at Troop A, informed me that a mob had gathered at Pleasant Hill and released two prisoners from the city jail. I drove around the town and entered from the south, and there on the sidewalk I saw the mob. At the storefront, two big huskies were holding two old men and banging their heads together, accompanied by shouts of, "Hang them!"

I stepped out with my shotgun and quickly separated the real militants from the rabble—there were three or four who were instigating the disturbance—and led them into the vestibule of a building to find out what was going on. All the while the

mob, in which there were many women and children, was milling around.

From the back of the crowd came the voice of a town bully, Luther Jones, crying, "Go on in and get him (meaning me)!" I said, "Let that brave man hiding behind all those women and children be the first to step up!"

Well, that quieted him down, and by this time I had help from one of my fellow officers. Junior Wallace drove up and we loaded the instigators and the two men they'd been abusing into the patrol car. Amid cries of, "Turn 'em over," Junior floored the gas pedal and the mob parted like the Red Sea.

Now there's a point to this story ... I think. And it is that things are not always as they seem. Jehovah's Witnesses claim exemption from military service by reason that all their members are ministers of the gospel. Naturally this didn't sit too well with people during wartime. It seems that the two old men that I had rescued and a younger companion had been passing out their newsletter, "The Watchtower," on the streets in Pleasant Hill. An altercation erupted between some local legionnaires and the Witnesses, and the town marshal



*Lt. Herbert D.  
Brigham, 1954*

had locked up the Witnesses for assault. Apparently, they had provoked the incident. I asked the mob participants later if they really would have hung those two old men. They said no, what they really intended to do was to drop them into the Rock Island Lake. They probably would have, too.

I enjoyed working the road, but I really felt that I accomplished more training others. Beginning in 1938, after I graduated from the FBI National Academy in Washington, D.C., and continuing until 1961, when I retired, I was active in training schools for Highway Patrol officers. I taught auto theft investigation, physical training, and use of firearms. The physical



*Sgt. Herb  
Brigham (stand-  
ing) working in  
the Auto Theft Bu-  
reau of General  
Headquarters.*



training included disarming exercises and methods of overcoming passive and active resistance. I had to demonstrate how to remove an automobile driver who doesn't want to be removed from his car, using trainees as guinea pigs. I recall one instance vividly. It happened during an in-service school. Under the wheel was the biggest man on the Highway Patrol, Trooper Ray Hollmann. He was about 6 feet, 5 inches tall and weighed 240 pounds.

Now, I'd told the class that this exercise was only a demonstration, purely for training, and that they were to offer only token resistance. But, Ray was his own man. He wasn't about to come out of that car. I was using the mouth hold where you hook your finger into the driver's opposite jaw and twist him out. But this fellow was strong. He had one hand on the wheel and the other on my wrist, and I must have had his mouth stretched several inches. The car began to rock violently. I realized that if I went much farther, somebody was going to get hurt. Then I felt a tap on the shoulder. It was the superintendent of the Patrol, M. Stanley Ginn. He said, "Break it up," and we did. I was never so glad to see anyone in my life.

But, you know, those men who were there have never let me forget that I couldn't get Ray Hollmann out of that car. Everyone likes to see the instructor get his butt kicked. Nothing personal, I guess, but they enjoy it just the same.

Superintendent Ginn insisted on vigorous physical training. About 1942, we had an in-service school at the Fairgrounds in Sedalia. This was in August and the weather was hot. I lined the men up and we jogged around the half-mile track in front of the grandstand. At the end of that run, we were bushed, but that didn't satisfy the superintendent. He had me line them up in single file, then bend over and grab their knees. The fellow at the foot of

the line had to leapfrog all 54 of his comrades. When he got to the head of the line, the man now at the rear had to do the same. So, each guy had to leapfrog 54 men and be leapfrogged by 54. I'll bet you won't find that one in your physical training curriculum today.

I'll always remember the riot at the Missouri Penitentiary on September 22, 1954. Captain K.K. Johnson called me at 7:01 p.m. and said a disturbance had broken out at the prison. I dressed and went to the prison office, where I met Colonel Hugh Waggoner, the superintendent. He said the inmates were rioting and had set fire to several buildings inside. He told me to do what I had to do to restore order. Governor Phil Donnelly was there. I looked askance at the governor and he nodded, so I knew I was justified in going in and doing what I deemed necessary.

Only a few Patrol officers had arrived, but I directed Trooper Oren Liley and Sergeant Ray Jenkins to go to the truck gate and see that no one got through. Luckily the railroad company had rolled a boxcar against the outside of the railroad gate on the far side of the compound to keep the inmates from breaking out. This was my first time in the prison. The yardmaster escorted me across an overhead walkway. From there I could see the fires burning furiously and the inmates out in the open hurling bricks at the yard lights.

I returned to the administration building and formed a small squad of troopers, among them Captain Potts and Troopers Russ Kennison and Carroll Price. We went up on the overhead and directed the inmates to cease activities and return to their cells. I repeated these commands several times and all I got were replies which were undignified to say the least and characteristic of that class of people.

I decided that since they were not amenable to my suggestions, perhaps I should take more drastic measures. I was carry-

ing a Thompson submachine gun and started firing three round bursts at the men in the front ranks. This came as a great surprise, for they immediately turned and scrambled away. In no time, the crowd dispersed. I remember cautioning Potts and Kennison to be on their guard against inmates attempting to climb up on the overhead. They had the means, as they had piled up boxes high enough to reach us. The inmates had hidden, but had not returned to their cells. I'd say there were about 500 convicts running loose, inhabitants of A, C, E, K, and J Halls.

While standing on the overhead, I heard a shot right behind me. It was a prison guard firing at some inmates who had climbed onto the roof of C Hall to dampen it with wa-

ter to keep it from burning. They were trying to help and here was this guy shooting at them. I ordered him to stop. This angered him and he left, saying he was going to report me.

Lying out in the yard were several inmates who had been wounded by gunfire. There would have been a lot more, but the shotgun ammunition they'd bought was defective. I saw that we'd have to take a squad of troopers into the yard to



*Lt. Herb Brigham prepares his Thompson sub-machine gun at the Missouri State Penitentiary, 1954.*

*After the riot, Lt. Herb Brigham displays some of the weapons used by convicts during the riot in September 1954.*



round up the inmates, so I went back downstairs to the administration building where more officers had gathered, along with a huge crowd of onlookers. I attempted to assemble a squad of 20 troopers, but the officer in charge refused, saying, "I'll be damned if you get any men. I'm busy putting people up on the towers!"

Disheartened, I returned to the inside and saw Lieutenant Governor Jim Blair, followed by a crowd of newsmen. They wanted me to give them the story of what had happened. I replied that I could not talk to them at that time, but that if they wanted to listen to what I said to Lieutenant Governor Blair, it was all right with me. I said, "Sir, we've broken the back of this riot, but there are convicts that need rounding up and several wounded ones who need to be brought into sick bay."

"What do you need?" asked Blair.

"I'd like a squad of 20 men."

I didn't go with him, but I'm told he went back outside where our men were assembled and counted off 20 and told them to follow him. Among them were Sergeant Ernest Van Winkle, the present assistant superintendent, and Trooper Kenny Miller, now director of the Laboratory.

I addressed the squad, explaining the situation and telling them to use their firearms only when necessary. Most of them had shotguns besides their .38-caliber revolvers, and I acquired a portable radio unit, which I gave to Miller, and a bullhorn, which I gave to Van Winkle. I knew he had a strong voice and considerable battle experience in World War II. I cautioned them not to reply to the taunts of the inmates and to remain in ranks.

As we started to enter the compound, along came a caravan of wounded inmates. Those able to walk were carrying their companions on mattresses. We al-

lowed them to proceed on to the sick bay under supervision. I might say that the majority of the wounds were in the posterior, as they had turned to run when hit.

We rounded up about 40 inmates and passed them into the administration building. While I was there I remember Sam Blair, Circuit Judge of Cole County, attempting to get Jefferson City firemen to enter the compound to extinguish the many fires now raging inside. But, they refused, even when promised armed guards. So, the buildings continued to burn.

The inmates were holding several guards hostage in C Hall. As we started into the place, we were met by a spokesman for the group, who demanded that newsmen be allowed inside to hear their grievances about bad food, restricted privileges, and so on. And he threatened us, saying, "If you patrolmen come in here, these hostages are going to be hurt."

I replied thusly: "I'm going to tell you this one time only. First, there will be no newspaper people down here. Second, address your complaints to the administration of this institution (who were conspicuous by their absence). Third, when we get ready to come in, we'll come in. If you hurt any of those hostages, there are going to be a lot of you people hurt. Go back and tell your friends that, and if they doubt what I've said, you remind them of all the people that have been picked up on this yard tonight."

Things remained at a stalemate through the night. I had to leave shortly after my conversation with the inmate because my leg had started hurting. I thought it was a charley horse, but when I got home I discovered my trousers were cut and that I had a bruise about the size of a silver dollar on my calf. Apparently, an errant bullet with its impetus nearly spent had struck me during the earlier skirmish.

I've always been thankful that shell didn't hit me directly. I'd have been out of action for a while.

By the next morning, all the halls were secured except C, where a number of the inmates, including many from other halls, were still holding out. Captain (later Colonel) Mike Hockaday planned to form two large squads and get them back into their cells. I led one group and Lieutenant Willie Barton, later captain of Troop C, led the other.

We sent a squad up each side of the hall, which was divided into two sections, with four tiers of cells and a walkway all around. We directed the inmates, most of who had holed up in the cells, to slam their doors, and then we'd pull the big levers locking the whole row. About that time I heard a shotgun blast from the third tier. When I got there, I saw an inmate lying on a bunk, his face bloody from the buckshot that had struck him. One of his companions inside said, "One of you so-and-so's shot him." I found out later that the fellow had been about to throw a heavy object down on the troopers below when somebody brought him down.

A few days later, when things had quieted down, I took Trooper Jimmy Runkle, our photographer, up on a tower to obtain a panoramic view of the prison interior. The twine plant, the license plate plant, and the school building were all destroyed by fire. I made the comment within the hearing of a guard that this was all so needless, and that it could have been prevented with quick action by the prison authorities. The guard said he'd been on this tower and had seen inmates climbing over the "snitch gate" dividing the compound and running around setting fires. I asked him why he didn't fire a warning shot down there. He said he'd been directed not to.

"But, didn't you have any weapons?" was my next question.

"Oh, yes, a rifle, shotgun, and a pistol."

"Well, what did you do with them?" I said.

"Laid them on top of the wall, so I could kick them off if any inmates started climbing up the tower after me."

My justification for saying that a warning shot would have discouraged the rioters was borne out by another guard's action when some inmates had attempted to roll four oil cars through the railroad gate. He fired at the ground and they scattered.

I must commend all the men who participated in quelling the riot, especially those who were in the 20-man squad that went in first. Willie Barton saved a prison employee's life by rescuing him from the burning school building and there were many other examples of bravery and resourcefulness.

People ask me if I miss Patrol work. I tell them, no, I don't miss being in law enforcement, but I do miss the acquaintances I've built up in my years with the Patrol. These include not only troopers, but also members of other departments. The Patrol was more than a job to me. The salary wasn't great, but it was adequate. My wife and I have acquired property and our two daughters are both college educated—advantages I didn't have. Counting my eight years in the military, I have spent 40 years in uniform, and it's been a good life."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Lt. Herb Brigham died in 1981.)*

# GLENN W. LAMPLEY

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*A former star football player for Southeast Missouri State College, Glenn Lampley served 35 years in Troop E. He was an original member of the Patrol's Safety Squadron, a famous but short-lived detail of 13 motorcycle officers, organized in 1940, but disbanded a year later because of the World War II draft. Glenn is a quiet, modest man who tends to play down his Patrol experiences. Today, he unselfishly devotes himself to senior citizens' work and can be justly proud of his efforts.*

In 1935, I was in my fourth year at Southeast Missouri State College, majoring in physical education, when I learned that the Missouri Highway Patrol was taking applications for 35 new officers. I couldn't see myself teaching all my life, and I had always been interested in law enforcement, so I applied and was accepted.

Following recruit training at Camp Clark near Nevada, I was stationed here in Cape Girardeau and I've lived here ever since. Been in this very house, which I built, since 1941. My last five years on the Patrol, from 1965 to 1970, I served as enforcement lieutenant for Troop E at the headquarters in Poplar Bluff, but I continued to live in Cape Girardeau, coming home on my off days.

Yes, I live here alone now. My wife died 16 years ago, and I never remarried. Don't know why. Just never did.

My first year on the Patrol, I witnessed two public hangings in New Madrid, Missouri. Counties were empowered to perform executions then. Several of us troopers were assigned to keep order. I'll never forget the sight: the scaffold surrounded by a high stockade, people



*Tpr. Glenn W. Lampley*

jammed inside and more milling around outside, the sheriff handing out passes at the gate to certain people and turning away many more.

The condemned men, whose names were Damion and Hamilton, had held up a service station and killed the operator. I don't remember which one mounted the scaffold first, but when they hit the lever releasing the trap door, the noose failed to break his neck. He hung there twitching for two or three minutes, finally strangling to death. It was horrible. When the second man dropped, though, you could hear his neck pop.

A few years later I saw another hanging in Sainte Genevieve; a young man was put to death for killing his sweetheart. Prior to springing the trap, the officials asked the man if he had any last words. He launched into quite an emotional speech, concluding with, "I'm prepared to meet you, my darling, over there on the other side." ... Perhaps he did.

I worked traffic most of the time during my road career, leaving the criminal work to Trooper Percy Little. Occasionally, Percy would call on me to help with an in-

vestigation, but the bulk of my activities were spent enforcing traffic regulations.

My mentioning Percy Little reminds me of a night we were investigating an accident together on Missouri Highway 72, north of Millersville. We had finished the investigation and were sitting in the patrol car with our red warning light flashing and our spotlight trained on the wrecked car down in a ravine. In the rearview mirror I saw a car approaching us, weaving uncertainly about the road.

"Percy, that guy's going to hit us," I said.

"No, he won't," he said, preoccupied with writing the accident report.

About that time Ka-Wham! He plowed into the patrol car. Neither of us was hurt, but our uniforms were scuffed up. We got out to check on the fellow who had hit us. He wasn't injured either, but, boy, was he drunk! Percy's patrol car was out of commission, so I caught a ride into Jackson to pick up my car.

One Saturday night Percy and I ran onto another drunk driver on Highway 61 between Cape Girardeau and Jackson. I was driving, but having no luck at stopping the guy, who was wandering from shoulder to shoulder.

"That fellow's going to kill somebody," said Percy. "I'm going to shoot a tire down."

I pulled up as close as I could behind the drunk's car. Percy aimed his pistol out the window and fired. The right rear tire blew with the impact and the drunk threw up his hands in surrender. With nobody steering it the car veered off the shoulder and out into a field where it mired down to the axles. The guy was so drunk he could hardly walk. Really polluted! We incarcerated him and that was that.

In 1940, I was a member of the Patrol's Safety Squadron, a group of 13 officers who traveled throughout Missouri on motorcycles, promoting safe driving through selective enforcement and public programs. We had a white trailer with a snack bar and a place to rest inside, and a white 1940 Ford Coupe to tow the trailer. It was a good show that helped sell safety and the Highway Patrol to the citizens. We'd go to different cities on weekends, one week to St. Joseph, then to Springfield, St. Louis, and so on. But, World War II came along and the squadron disbanded.

I was called to active duty and went to the Philippines as a replacement for another officer; therefore, I found myself thrown in with an outfit that I knew nothing about. This had me worried for a while, because I wasn't sure they could shoot straight or anything else, but it turned out OK. They were all from the Connecticut area and were great guys. Ours was a highway transportation division that moved supplies from the rear right up to the front lines.

We were delivering supplies one day about 150 miles north of Manila when we met another group from the 128th Infantry Division. Guess who their supply officer was—Percy Little! Talk about coincidences. I knew he was in that general theater of war, but had no idea I'd ever run into him. Later, I spent some time with him while he served in Manila as a precinct captain for the military police.

Getting back to the subject of motorcycles, I've taken a few spills on them—nothing serious, though. Around 1950, I was on a detail at Springfield where President Harry S. Truman was to present a plaque honoring Simon Bolivar to the president of one of those South American countries. I gassed up my wheel and started for Springfield from Poplar Bluff in the rain. Before I could get out of town I wound up in some fellow's front yard,



muddy, but unhurt. The headlight on my motorcycle was broken, but I made it to Springfield. Trooper Russell "Poodle" Breid had a minor accident on his cycle en route to the same assignment.

Our motorcycles were those big Harley-Davidson 74s—really good wheels. I saw some of the Troop E men on theirs the other day. Those Kawasaki's are nice looking machines, but I hate to see the state buying foreign-made products. I'm funny, I guess, but I won't buy anything not made in the United States. If I go into a store and pick up a sweater that's been manufactured in Korea or Taiwan, they can keep it. We have a factory here in Cape—Edwards Sporting Goods—that makes fine quality leather coats and other equipment. They've been hurt terribly by foreign competition. That's not right.

On the subject of dignitaries, I helped escort Vice President Hubert Humphrey around the Southeast Missouri area shortly before I retired. Several days before Humphrey arrived, Secret Service men flew in and checked the routes of travel, paying special attention to bridges and overpasses where an assassin could hide. I was impressed with their thoroughness and the way they protected him when he arrived.

His Lear Jet landed at the Malden Air Force Base from which we escorted him to Dexter for a hospital dedication. Then he went to Poplar Bluff for a 10th District Democratic Rally. What a crowd there was! Before boarding his plane he presented each officer on the detail with a tie-pin and cuff links bearing the vice presidential seal. We had an opportunity to talk with him during the visit; he was a fine gentleman.

What I liked about working for the Highway Patrol was the variety of experiences. Every day you met new people with new ideas, and there was always the element of the unknown. Those things made the



*Lt. Glenn W. Lampley, retired (1996).*

job enjoyable. Sure, you met some people who gave you trouble, but by and large, the majority were good people who cooperated with you. My career spanned parts of five decades and I've seen a lot of changes. The world has changed a lot since 1935, and law enforcement with it. Of course, there are the obvious differences such as improvements in cars and communications, but the biggest change I see is in people's attitudes toward the police. The respect for law and order isn't there anymore. People just don't care. I sincerely believe that a trooper has a more dangerous job today than did his counterpart of 30 or 40 years ago. You don't know who you're stopping out there on the road. An officer may be able to check a license wanted in a split second with the aid of computers, but he can't predict what a suspect will do. I was fortunate during my career; only a couple of times did I have a gun pulled on me and each time I talked the man into handing it over.

Since retiring from the Patrol in 1970, I've been active in senior citizens' work. I was a delegate to the Silver Haired Legislature in Jefferson City twice, where we met and drafted bills to present to our local representative or senator for introduction in the regular session of the General Assembly.



I'm most proud of the nutrition center operated by the Cape Girardeau County Council on Aging, of which I am chairman. The center provides a hot, balanced noon meal for any citizen of 60 years or older free-of-charge. The program is federally funded and is one of the best government projects going. Our center is housed in an old county farm building, donated by the county court and remodeled for our needs. All work is voluntary except for our three cooks. One of our big problems, a universal one, is transportation to and from the center, but we managed to get people there and back home when they need a ride, and we also home-deliver meals to shut-ins.

Our nutrition center is one of the few in Missouri that operate seven days a week. Federal requirements mandate a five-day a week operation, but people get lonely on weekends and the center provides them a place to visit and play cards. We have excellent attendance on Saturdays and Sundays.

I'm also on the board of directors of the Area Agency on Aging, a group that meets monthly to approve funding for the 21 nutrition centers in the 18-county Bootheel region of Missouri.

I don't work all the time, though. Each year our group sponsors a trip. I've traveled to Hawaii, Mexico City, Acapulco, Canada, Florida, the Bahamas, and on two Caribbean tours covering St. Thomas, Haiti, Santo Domingo, and Jamaica. This year we're planning a trip to Venezuela. Everyone enjoys these tours. They're a great way to make friends and advertise your organization ... and, believe me, there's never a dull moment.

I take exercise every morning down there in the basement to keep fit and I walk regularly. As far as I know, my health is good. The secret to happiness is to keep those wheels turning in your head —

that's true for everybody, not just retired people."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Lt. Glenn W. Lampley died on May 10, 1997, at the age of 88.)*

# ROY F. "PAPPY" DIX

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*Known and revered for his nerve, intelligence, and driving skill, Pappy Dix evinces complete confidence in himself to handle any situation. Indeed, as is shown in the following account, he has been involved in some dangerous ones.*

"My making application for the Patrol was sort of an accident, and even after applying, I almost didn't take the examination. It was 1937. I was physical education director, coach, and acting principal at South Junior High School here in Joplin. The regular principal had suffered an illness, which left him paralyzed in the lower extremities, and I was filling in ... at no extra salary. This was in Depression days and teachers' salaries were too low to live on, so I worked anyplace I could. I played semipro baseball, refereed over 100 basketball games a year, and sold clothes for J.C. Penney in the summer.

A fellow teacher who had a brother-in-law on the Missouri Highway Patrol asked me why I didn't join.

"Why, my Lord, I'm not big enough," I said. I only weighed 140 pounds. All the exercise kept me trim, I guess.

"Well, will you fill out an application if I get you one?" he asked. I did, and that was all I heard about that for a while.

That summer the WPA sponsored a program to build a playground system for the children of Joplin. Their plans were to use the school grounds. The superintendent of schools agreed, but insisted on the right to choose the director. I had the good fortune to be chosen. In no time, we had a good baseball program going.



*Tpr. Roy F. "Pappy" Dix.*

A few weeks later, I attended a meeting in Jefferson City with recreational directors from other Missouri cities to meet the national director from New York and discuss our individual programs. When I finished my presentation, the national director stood up and in so many words called me a liar. He just couldn't believe that we had that many kids participating. I said, "Now Mr., what you just said may be OK in New York, but down here in Missouri, those are fighting words. I'm inviting you to visit Joplin, and I'll prove what I've said is true."

So, he came down the next day and I took him around. I guess he liked what he saw, because it was 11 o'clock that night before he left. I was supposed to be back in Jefferson City at 8 o'clock the next morning to take the entrance examination for the Patrol.

My wife said, "You're not going to take that test?"

"It's too late," I answered. "We'd have to drive all the way up there (200 miles) and I wouldn't get a bit of sleep."

But, wouldn't you know it, my little girl was lying there in her baby bed—she was just big enough to talk—and she said, "Daddy, I want you to take the test."

Well, that settled it. We took our daughter to my wife's mother and left for Jefferson City. We arrived in time for breakfast, and then I drove over to the Capitol building to take the examination. I was the 13th man in line for the physical. The 12 ahead of me were great big fellows. I said to myself, "Boy, you don't have a chance." But those guys ahead of me were rejected for one reason or another, and before long I was first in line.

I asked one of the doctors, "Just what are you guys looking for, anyway?"

He said, "Do you want the job?"

"Well, I'm here."

"Stay in line."

All I had to take was the eye examination. I came back home and in a few days received a letter telling me to report to Camp Crowder near Neosho on July 1 for recruit training.

When I returned to Joplin after training the superintendent of schools called me. "I understand you've taken a position with the Highway Patrol," he said. I confirmed the fact. "I've got a better job for you here," he said.

"I've been here 10 years," I told him, "and it's the first time you've told me that." I explained that I intended to take the Patrol job, but that if at some future date circumstances changed and the job was still open in Joplin, I'd be glad to accept.

My first Patrol assignment was in Troop C at Kirkwood. I worked under Captain

T.L. Leigh (pronounced *lay*), a wonderful man and fine commanding officer. My on-the-job training was with Trooper H.H. "Hub" Wells, a man I admired very much. He was a good policeman—one you could learn a lot from, but he had ways of doing things that were his alone. If I'd tried to work like he did, I wouldn't have lasted long. He had this gift of talking to every man in his own language—ex-convicts, bankers, preachers, you name it—and intelligently, too.

I was still just riding and observing when we were called to investigate a murder. A man from Tennessee had been found dead near Flat River, so Wells and I met Sergeant A.G. White at the funeral home where an autopsy was being performed. White and Wells didn't want to watch it, and neither did I, but they told me to stay there while they went to the crime scene. Afterwards, I drove out to meet them in the car they'd left me, but when I arrived, no one was there. I drove around awhile and finally spied the patrol car parked behind a service station.

"Where have you been?" asked Wells.

"Looking for you," I said.

"Why, we were right here when you drove by the first time," he said. "You want to always observe both sides of the road as well as what's ahead and behind," he went on. "That way you won't miss anything."

I remembered that, and throughout my career I practiced it. I didn't miss much, especially cars parked behind service stations!

Back then we didn't have two-way radios in our cars. Instead, they were equipped with short wave sets tuned to station KIUK in Jefferson City, which was supposed to relay messages from the

troop headquarters. Once in a great while you could hear it. The best communications network going was the telephone contact system. Our headquarters would call specified filling stations or restaurants along the highways and the proprietors would relay orders to you when you stopped by. This worked fine if there were a number of contact points, but in the sparsely populated areas, you can see that the system wasn't too efficient: Contact points might be many miles apart.

I first patrolled by myself on St. Charles Rock Road in the city of St. Charles. Every municipality had its deputy constables. These guys, donkeys we called them, were out prowling the roads and victimizing motorists on trumped-up charges. They would check a registration number, find one from out-of-town, and pull the car over. Then they'd tell the driver he'd violated a traffic law and that he'd have to spend the night in jail—unless the driver wanted to settle it there on the highway. What could the fellow do, but pay up? Of course, those "officers" and the justices of the peace were in cahoots. No doubt they split the money. They had quite a racket going.

This was wrong and I did what I could to stop it. Whenever I'd see one of those fellows pull a car over, I'd stop behind him and sit there until he was through. He'd come back in a fluster and ask, "You want something?"

I'd say, "No, I saw you stop that car and they looked dangerous, so I was just backing you up." Usually, it would be a man and his family.

When the donkey had left, I'd stop the victims and talk to them. "Brother, you saved us a lot of trouble back there," they'd say. "That character was about to arrest us when you showed up."

I was out driving my personal car one night and I got stopped. The cop half recognized me, I think, but when I handed

him my driver's license that gave Joplin as my residence, it threw him for a loop.

He said, "What do youse do for a living?"

"I work for the state."

His brow wrinkled, "Is you a patrolman?"

I said I was.

"Well, why didn't you say so? We want to get along with youse guys."

"We can get along fine," I said. "You've seen my license, now let me see yours." If he hadn't had one, I was going to arrest him right there.

That situation has been resolved now with the elimination of the justices of the peace, and a good thing, too.

One of the first nights I worked alone I came upon a drunk driver. He lived around Creve Coeur Lake—a lot of hoodlums had settled there—and he decided he was going to whip me when I told him to get out of the car. He didn't get the job done, and after I subdued him, I took him to the courthouse in Clayton before the justice of the peace.

When the justice read the charge, the drunk jumped him. I had to dive in the middle of it and thump the drunk again.

It seemed like the right thing to do at the time, but that was one of the biggest mistakes of my life. When I came to court to testify on the case, the justice said, "Do you have a case here today?" I reminded him of the drunk I had dragged off of him a couple of weeks earlier. He said, "That case has been heard already. We fined him four dollars plus 70 cents court costs." I truly had made a mistake. If I'd let that drunk pummel that old justice a little, the fellow wouldn't have got off so lightly, and

maybe that prosecution would have improved generally in that court.

A few months later my patrol route was changed from St. Charles Rock Road to U.S. Highway 66. Trooper Charlie Bosch and I stopped a car with Oklahoma license plates one night. As I walked up on the car I saw there were two occupants, the driver and a man lying down in the back seat.

"What's the matter with your friend?" I asked the driver.

"Oh, he's asleep," he said.

"That's the first time I ever saw anybody sleep and bat his eyes," I said. Then, I told the guy in the back, "You get up real careful, friend." He was lying on a loaded gun. These men had stolen the car from an Oklahoma family and driven to Illinois where they'd shot a fellow over a crap game. The Illinois authorities picked them up the next day.

Eight years later I received a subpoena from Oklahoma City to testify in the case. Now, I'd only seen those fellows one night and about all I remembered was that one was tall and the other was short, and that both had heavy heads of hair. Of course, I would be called on to identify them under oath. Their file contained no pictures, so all I could do was match their names with their descriptions.

In court they brought out eight prisoners, all dressed alike. Six of them were tanned and two had prison pallor. These pale ones had to be the fellows who had done the shooting, so I identified them by name and their lawyer pled them guilty.

Afterward, the defense attorney stopped me in the hall. "I'd like to buy your dinner," he said. I've never turned down a free meal in my life, so I joined him.

"That's remarkable that you could remember those men after eight years," he

told me over the dinner table. "And, not only did you recall their faces, but you knew each one's name, too. It's really remarkable."

I didn't dare tell him my secret.

On November 10, 1939, I transferred to Troop D. I drove to the troop headquarters in Springfield to pick up Trooper H.P. Bruner, who had just joined the Patrol. We were to be stationed in Neosho, the first troopers to ever live there. The troop commander, Captain Reed, told me, "Now, Dix, you're going to find that half the cars in McDonald County are not licensed, but there's nothing you can do about it. We just can't get any prosecution on this charge."

"Nothing" is a broad assumption. This problem was a challenge to me and I resolved to meet it. The first day on the road we arrested a man for having no license plates. Captain Reed looked at the ticket and smiled. "It won't do you any good," he repeated. He was right; the fellow was gone from the courthouse before we were.

But, you know, we did find a way to force those people to buy license plates. I guess I can tell it now after 40 years. Bruner and I reasoned that if a car had no license plate, the driver had no right to drive it. McDonald County is very hilly. When we'd stop somebody, we'd always make sure it was on an upgrade. We'd make him hoof it home and leave the car. Emergency brakes weren't too good in those days and when the driver returned to get the car, he'd usually find it had rolled into the ditch and he'd have to find somebody to pull it out.

Several months passed and Captain Reed came down to ride and talk with me on my shift. We drove McDonald County highways a whole day and didn't see one



car without a license plate. "OK," he said, "how'd you do it?"

"Captain, it's a long story and I'd rather not relate it," I said. He never mentioned it again.

I remember a murder I investigated a couple of years after that. Bruner was in the armed services, and I was the only officer stationed in Neosho. In the town of Noel, a man named Butch Price had shot his girlfriend dead with a shotgun as she and her father walked to their home. Witnesses said Price had a pistol as well as the shotgun, and that he was afoot somewhere in the little town.

There were constables, marshals, a sheriff, and every other kind of jackleg lawman present—along with a crowd of townspeople, some of whom had fortified themselves with liquid courage for the coming manhunt.

The sheriff sidled up to me. "You got any ammunition?" he asked.

"Why, sure," I said.

"Give me some. I only got two shells in my gun." I gave him four.

The search began, me in the lead, with the posse strung out behind. A woman related to Price said he might be in her house. When we arrived, I told the sheriff, "You take the back door and I'll take the front. We'll go in and get him." I charged through, found nothing, and went out the back. There stood the sheriff, still watching the door.

Price's brother was in the crowd. "I think he's in my house," he said.

As we walked to the house, I could hear this character behind me repeating over and over, "State trooper, you're going to get killed, you're going to get killed." I glanced over my shoulder and saw that he had a pistol pointed right at my back.

"Not by you," I said. I grabbed the gun and threw it as far as I could.

"You oughtn't to have done that," said a constable in the crowd. "That was my piece you threw away."

"Well, you should have kept it if it was yours," I told him, "and not loaned it to a drunk."

The house showed no lights. Both the front and back doors were locked. My command to come out was met by silence.

"I know Butch is in there," said the brother.

"Do you have a key to the doors?" I asked.

"No."

"I'll break the back door down," I said, "and one of you follow me in." A deputy constable said he'd be right behind me.

I backed off a few steps, took a short run, and kicked the lathe door off the hinges. The owner of the house had neglected to tell me about the meat curing on several sawhorses just inside. We wore knee-high boots then, and it was a good thing, because I hit those sawhorses full speed, and the meat and I turned somersault and fetched up against the opposite wall. I was unhurt. I thought, Lord, if he's in here, he'll kill that constable for sure. But, I needn't have worried. Butch Price wasn't in the room and neither was the deputy. He'd stayed outside.

I went through an interior door very carefully and saw an open staircase leading to the attic. I put my hat on a broomstick and began stomping up the steps, hoping—for the only time in my life—that

Price would fire at the hat. No shots rang out as the hat cleared the open doorway. I eased my way up and shined my flashlight around the attic. It was empty.

Then a thought occurred to me. "Where does he live anyway?"

"Oh, about a block from here," said the city marshal. "But it'll do no good, because I've already checked the home."

"Did you go inside?" I asked.

"No."

"Well, he's probably in there," I decided. So, the posse trooped over to Butch Price's home, a one story, wooden affair with only four rooms.

"How you gonna get him out?" questioned the city marshal.

I'd had enough of breaking down doors for one night, so I said, loudly, so Butch could hear me if he was inside, "I'm going to burn the house down and kill him when he comes running out." Of course, I'd never have done it.

Butch was under the foundation. When he heard that, he yelled, "Don't kill me. I'm coming, I'm coming!"

"Listen very carefully," I said. "Throw out your shotgun and pistol, and crawl out slowly."

I got behind a corner of the foundation where he couldn't shoot me and pretty soon out came the weapons, followed by Butch Price. I jumped on his back and handcuffed him after a brief struggle. I stood up and looked around. He and I were the only human beings in sight. My "help" had found other things to do.

I walked to the jail with my prisoner. Standing outside was the posse, looking

brave again. One fellow said, "Trooper, you better get that guy out of town before we hang him."

I said, "There's not enough guts in this town to take this man away from me. You guys could have apprehended him yourselves before I got here if you'd really wanted to."

I took Butch to jail in Pineville and told the prosecuting attorney, who had assisted in the manhunt, "You lock him up and don't let anybody talk to him until tomorrow when I come back over to fingerprint him." I was overstepping my authority plenty, but he did just as I asked. Somebody told me later that the prosecutor, W.T. Tracy, who hated the Patrol, confided in him that, "By God, I've finally found something those sons of bitches are good for. That Dix is the meanest man I ever saw in my life."

A few days later, the phone rang at my home. It was the sheriff's wife in Pineville. "Come quick!" she said. "Butch Price has gone crazy. He's got a big stick of wood and he's threatening to kill all the other prisoners!"

"Where's the sheriff?"

"He went to Arkansas. Please hurry!"

I drove to Pineville, picked up the jail keys from the sheriff's wife at her home, and went to the jail. It was built of concrete blocks with a heating stove in the middle and a bank of cells on one end. They usually just locked the outer door and let the prisoners roam inside, but sometimes they'd lock them in the cells.

"I'm going in there," I told the old deputy, who accompanied me. "You take my revolver and lock the outer door. Regardless of what happens, don't open that door."

I entered the place and saw Price standing there with a big piece of stove wood. The other prisoners had fled to the cells, where they perched on the top bunks like a row of hoot owls.

Butch threw down the wood and ran to a cell. "If you come in here, I'll cut you!" he threatened.

All he had was a razor blade. "Butch," I said, "I've come down here to take you to Neosho. If you spill one drop of blood, I'll stomp you to death!"

I jumped inside and pinned his arm against the edge of a steel bunk. "Drop it, Butch," I said.

"I can't."

I repeated the command twice and he still insisted he couldn't drop the blade. I eased up a little and the blade fell to the floor. I had exerted so much pressure on his arm muscles, he couldn't open his hand. He settled down enough that I could handcuff him and take him to Neosho.

The following summer, the McDonald County sheriff called me and said a man had been found dead in a house. Foul play was suspected. I figured the investigation might be a little messy, so I wore old civilian clothes, rather than my uniform. Thank God I did, because the victim had been ripening in that house four days in the summer heat. Dead chickens lay about the yard. Even outside, the stench of decay would knock you over.

"Hello, Dix," said the sheriff. "Do you want a drink?"

I considered his offer, then declined.

"Well, you're gonna need one when you go in that house."

When I opened the door, I realized what he meant. Four law officers were right behind me and they pitched their cookies right then and there. I would've too, but nothing would come up.

Nauseating as it was, I had to investigate the death and gather evidence if possible. The man lay on the floor, his head smashed to a pulp. In his death throes he had vomited and defecated. I found a carton of arsenic and collected some of the spoiled food on the dinner table, thinking it was probably poisoned.

After being in there for what seemed like hours, the sheriff and I came back outside. Noticing he was still a little green, I said, "Sheriff, you need a drink!" He staggered over to a little apple tree there in the yard and heaved all over again. "Oh, God, I'm sick," he moaned.

I drove home, burned my clothes, took six showers, and began making some inquiries into the crime. The crime lab at Jefferson City later confirmed that the victim, Johnny Branson, had consumed enough arsenic with his food to kill a herd of elephants—he'd been beaten for good measure.

We caught the murderers a short time later, two locals, an old guy (I've forgotten his name), and his girlfriend, Good-Tooth Annie. Funny thing about Annie, she'd admit to the murder, then deny everything. I couldn't get a written statement, and all we had was circumstantial evidence, because the boyfriend wouldn't talk.

On the way to the coroner's inquest, I told her, "Now, Annie, this is your day. You're going to get up in front of the coroner's jury and tell your story. You'll be under oath, so you'll have to tell the truth." Wouldn't you know it, the old gal got up there and told everything down to the last detail. The motive for the murder was merely to get Branson out of the way so they could live in the house.

On the subject of murder, I remember another sordid one. In fact the details were more disgusting than the one I just told about. I had completed my investigation and was sitting in the sheriff's office at Carthage typing my report. My typing was awful—hunt, peck, erase, you know how it goes. The circuit judge's young wife walked up, observed my ineptness, and asked, "Can I type that for you?"

"Oh, no, I wouldn't think of letting you type this. Thank you, but there are words in this report that you shouldn't see."

That woman raised such a fuss that I finally relented and gave it to her to type. Serves her right, I thought.

She came back the next morning with that report typed beautifully. With a twinkle in her eye, she said, "If you get any more of these, would you call me?"

When the second World War ended, Trooper John Rick was assigned to Neosho. He told Colonel Hugh Waggoner that he'd like to go where it was peaceful and quiet, so he sent him down to work with me. The Army base, Camp Crowder, was still there. You know how peaceful 65,000 servicemen can be. The first eight days, we caught nine car thieves and made five other felony arrests. On the ninth day during a lull, we were sitting in the zone office at Carthage typing all those reports.

Rick would peck away awhile and then look at that mountain of work to be done. Finally, he pushed his chair back and said, "I thought it was supposed to be quiet down here."

"Why, Rick," I said, "You can't expect it to be this quiet all the time."

I used to pride myself on my driving. No violator ever outran me. If I saw his taillights, he was caught. Reflecting back, I realize that I took some unnecessary

chances, but I wasn't about to let anybody get away.

John Rick and I were called to a robbery in progress one night near the Missouri-Arkansas line. Highway 88, a winding, narrow road was the most direct route to the scene. I'd traveled the road dozens of time at high speeds, so I knew all of its twists and turns. I pushed the gas to the floor when I could, and we fairly flew around the curves. A hill would come rushing up in the headlights and around and down we'd go. I glanced over at John. He was sitting there, loose and easy. "Don't hurt to scare me. I've been scared lots of times," he grunted.

Bravado, I thought, but I found out later that he'd been a PT boat commander in World War II. I guess my driving was nothing to what he'd faced in the Pacific.

I transferred to Mexico, Missouri, on March 15, 1948. At that time things were pretty wild in that town. One night the city police called Trooper T.D. "Tillie" Cameron and I for assistance at a disturbance at a tavern in a predominantly black section of town. None of their white officers would go, so they'd sent their only black officer. Richard Johnson, to try to break it up, with no success.

When we arrived, the din was terrific. Several of the patrons were taking the tavern and each other apart. With shotguns in hand, Tillie and I went in. "Everybody up against the wall!" we commanded. They quieted down quickly and did as they were told. You could hear knives, brass knuckles, razors, and all manner of weapons hitting the floor. We arrested two or three and took them to jail.

Later, one of the Mexico policemen asked Johnson, the black officer, if we'd been any help to him. "Help?" he said. "Why, when them troopers came in there, it got so quiet, you could have heard a gnat scratchin' his backside!"



As I said at the beginning, my background was in teaching. I was privileged to instruct Patrol officers from 1946 to 1961. I was never a regular faculty member, but was called in to teach pursuit driving, interrogation and interviewing, bus and truck law, and a few other specialized courses.

I was 56 when I retired from the Patrol. I probably could have worked four more years, but I was afraid that if I waited until I reached 60, I wouldn't be able to get a teaching job. That hasn't proved exactly true. I returned to Joplin to teach biology at Parkwood High School. After a year and a half, I switched to drivers' education, which I taught for several years. I later served as dean of men until I was 65, the compulsory retirement age for secondary school teachers. I still remember the standing ovation and gifts I received at the last assembly. I'm not sure whether they were praising me or just relieved to see me go.

But, I wasn't through teaching. The dean of Missouri Southern State College in Joplin asked me if I'd instruct in law enforcement courses. I was there for five years. After age 70, you aren't allowed to teach full-time anymore, so now I just fill in when they need somebody to take a subject that nobody else wants to teach. I'm permitted to work 360 hours a year and I enjoy every minute in the classroom. I also teach defensive driving two Saturdays a month to traffic offenders, mostly young folks.

I like people. That's essential both in law enforcement and teaching. I often give my classes a little personal philosophy, and the essence of it is this: Always approach everybody with a smile on your face, no matter what the circumstances. Remember that, and it'll save you a lot of trouble.

When an officer stops a driver for a violation, he should remember that the per-

son violated the law, not the officer's honor. I never gave any man a tongue-lashing. The easiest way to make an arrest is to tell the person what he did wrong, answer his questions cheerfully, and write the ticket if he deserves it. Above all, don't argue; if you do, you'll just make two people mad.

I have always respected law officers, but I expected no favors from any officer, nor should they have expected any from me. I've arrested circuit judges, prosecutors, sheriffs, and city police officers. They were either right or wrong. This might be frowned on in some circles, but that was the only way I could be just with myself and everyone else. I always said: Temper your justice with mercy, but for goodness' sake, don't be too merciful."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Sergeant Pappy Dix died June 11, 1983. He was 78 years old.)*

# HERBERT F. WICKHAM

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*A native of Southeast Missouri, Herb Wickham spent most of his 29 years with the Patrol stationed there, serving in Jackson, Sikeston, Hayti, Malden, and Poplar Bluff. In 1959, he transferred to Springfield and retired with the rank of lieutenant in 1966. Veteran of many shooting incidents, and wild car chases, he recounts some of his most memorable here.*

"I'd have to say that my first 20 years on the Patrol were my happiest. I spent them here in Southeast Missouri. Sure, I grew up here, but that wasn't the only reason I liked it. I always preferred criminal work to traffic enforcement. Chasing speeders and standing out on the highway freezing your tail off at an accident scene never appealed to me. I've always considered catching criminals to be real police work, and we had plenty of that in Southeast Missouri.

Cooperation was always excellent between our department and the sheriffs, too, and that can make your job a lot more satisfying and productive. I've encouraged several boys to join the Patrol, and some have returned to the Southeast to work, but others haven't wanted to return. I don't understand it. This is the best place in the state to start a career in law enforcement.

I broke in with the best criminal investigator in this part of the country, Percy Little. Why, he'd rather investigate crimes than eat when he was hungry. In fact, we went on slim rations a lot of days—cheese and crackers for 14 hours while we trailed hog thieves, chicken thieves, cattle thieves, burglars, robbers, and an occasional murderer. Percy was sharp and he had connections with police officers everywhere, knew 'em all—city police, railroad



*Herbert F. Wickham, early in his career.*

detectives, FBI agents, sheriffs—and he knew how to work with them, too.

We had some unusual cases. Back in the late '30s there was an old fellow down in Bollinger County called "Peg" who was a counterfeiter—a small-time counterfeiter. He made quarters! Three of us troopers, Little, Glenn Lampley, and I, surprised him in bed one night. We had him dead to rights; his counterfeiting apparatus was right there in plain sight. Peg was up in years and didn't put up any struggle; consequently, we let our guard down. All of a sudden I heard Lampley say, "Hey, Hey! What are you doin'?"

Old Peg had hopped up on his bed and was rummaging around on a shelf above it. Glenn wrestled him down and held him while Percy and I checked the shelf. That old rascal had a loaded pistol up there. There would have been trouble if Lampley hadn't seen him.

One time—this would have been about 1938—Percy got word that a couple of safecrackers were holed up in a house-

boat on the Mississippi River, north of Cape Girardeau. These guys had pulled jobs all over southern Illinois and South-eastern Missouri. Little, Lampley, and I drove down there early one morning before sunrise. We wore khakis, so as not to arouse suspicion.

The houseboat was anchored several feet offshore. A plank stretched from the bank to the bow of the boat. Lampley remained on shore armed with his shotgun, acting as rear guard if we ran into trouble. Percy and I would enter the boat and attempt to surprise the criminals.

That plank we had to cross was not very wide, maybe eight inches, and not too thick, two inches at most, and I made the mistake of letting Percy go first. He weighed at least 230 pounds. He got across OK, but when he jumped into the boat, I was in the middle of the board. I must have catapulted three feet in the air. I came down and hugged that plank for dear life. It finally stopped bouncing and I got to my feet and followed Little onto the boat.

The living quarters consisted of two compartments, one behind the other. The door was unlocked. As we went into the first room, we saw one of the guys asleep on a bunk. He stirred and mumbled as we came in. Percy reached for the revolver in the pocket of his khakis and commanded: "Get—! Get your—! Get your hands—!" His voice faltered as the hammer caught and he couldn't get his revolver out. He yanked a couple more times unsuccessfully.

"Get your hands up, or I'll blow your head off!" he thundered, pistol still in his pocket. The old boy in the bed's eyes popped open. "I give up! I give up!" he cried.

We handcuffed him, confiscated the revolver under his pillow, and went on to the second compartment. The other safe-cracker was still asleep in bed, so we had no problem with him. These arrests

cleared up about 35 safe burglaries and robberies in that area of the country.

When I remember that incident I always think how lucky I was. I might have drowned in the Mississippi when Percy jumped off that plank!

I never worked with two finer men than Glenn Lampley and Percy Little. It's a pity that you couldn't have interviewed Percy before he passed away last year. He could have told you some stories that would have raised your hackles.

My interest in police work commenced early in life, for my father was a policeman; in fact he was a police chief here in Cape Girardeau for several years before his death in 1931. While attending Southeast Missouri State College, I used to accompany Sheriff Adam Hoffman when he transported prisoners to the state penitentiary in Jefferson City. Hoffman was one of the best sheriffs I ever met. He later took a position with the federal government.

I became interested in joining the Patrol in 1935, but when I learned that five feet, eight inches was the minimum height for troopers, I decided I had no chance, because I stood only five-seven and three-quarters. In 1936, I was serving as chief of police here in Cape, like my father before me. I met two troopers, Captain Bob Moore and Trooper Warren Wallis. I couldn't believe my eyes. Those guys were a lot shorter than I was. I thought, what the hell, I'm tall enough to make it.

In 1937, I applied and by stretching a little, even passed the height regulation. Of course, they measured you with a ruler laid across your head and it wasn't hard to gain a quarter of an inch by elevating your forehead slightly. I passed the remaining tests and was accepted. I found out later that Moore and Wallis had secured waivers for the height requirement.

Following a four-week training course at Camp Clark near Nevada and a short break-in period, I was assigned to Jackson. I was the first trooper to be stationed

there. I believe the reason I was sent to Jackson was the dangerous intersection of old U.S. 61 and Missouri 25, east of town.

I transferred to Sikeston in 1939, working under Sergeant Melvin Dace. There were two other troopers in the zone beside myself—John Tandy and Vincent Boisaubin.

Then came World War II. I entered the army October 4, 1940, and after battalion command and staff officers' school in Fort Benning, Georgia, I was sent to Little Rock, Arkansas, as intelligence officer for my regiment. But I couldn't cut it—wasn't intelligent enough, I guess—and finally wound up overseas with the 70th Infantry Division as a captain. I was promoted to major on my 38th birthday. I served in Germany, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, and Holland, returning home just after Christmas in 1945. I had accrued leave time until March 9, 1946, but I craved activity and wanted to return to the Patrol.

They re-examined me, pronounced me fit, and assigned me to Hayti. That was quite a place. I was the only patrolman there and had to handle all the work in Pemiscot County and part of Dunklin County. Bennie Graham, stationed at Kennett, was the only other trooper in the area.

There hadn't been a trooper in Hayti for four years, and those people had grown accustomed to living without us. A lot of them liked it that way. They'd gone so damned long without much law enforcement, they decided they'd drive me out. I was forced off the road in my patrol car four times in the first week I was there. Every time I made an arrest, I had to fight somebody.

We'd stopped wearing the long boots and breeches with the blackjack pocket, and I didn't want to walk up on everybody with my gun drawn, so at night when I had to carry a flashlight anyway, I used it as a blackjack. I wore out so many flashlights

conking those characters that Captain Wallis said I'd have to replace the next one I broke.

In the nick of time they sent some assistance. Harold Schmitt, now a major at General Headquarters, was the first man, and he was wonderful help. He learned fast. Harold married a beautiful girl down there, but they didn't stay long. He hated the town and the working conditions. There was an average of one violent death each week in the Pemiscot and Dunklin County area, resulting from traffic accidents and shooting and stabbings. I couldn't blame him for the way he felt; I didn't like a lot of the people either, but after I'd been there awhile, I sort of got used to it. After Harold Schmitt came Jeff Hickman, Ed Kelsey, and Norman Tinnin, all good men.

In 1950, I was promoted to sergeant in charge of the Bootheel zone. The crazy part was, they sent me to Malden by myself! None of my men lived close to me. The Patrol did some strange things in those days. Malden was the worst place I ever lived. Thank God for the driver license examination program that began in 1952. It enabled me to move to Poplar Bluff as supervisor of the examiners in Troop E.

I held that position 'til 1957, when to my surprise, I was promoted to lieutenant in charge of enforcement for Troop E. My first duty, though, was to go to Jefferson City to collaborate with Sergeant J.C. Smith in rewriting the Highway Patrol Operations Manual. At the time, we had this little manual, only about 1/2 inch thick—that's all you really need—but, J.C. and I made a three months' job of it and produced this voluminous thing about five times as thick as the old one. We had a lot of fun writing it. Cost the state a lot of money, no doubt.

In 1959, J.C., George Kahler, Jack Inman, and I attended the Southern Police Institute in Louisville, Kentucky. When I



got back, to my sorrow, I was transferred to Troop D, Springfield. The transfer meant a substantial loss of money for me, because I was a colonel in the National Guard in command of the Second Battle Group, which had its headquarters in Poplar Bluff. If I left, I knew they'd ask me to retire from the Guard. Captain O.L. Wallis of Troop E did all he could to get the colonel to change his decision, but it stood, and I went to Springfield. You know, though, it wasn't too bad after all. I had a great bunch of men working under me. I really put 'em to work! One of my best buddies over there was Sergeant Warren "Shorty" Wallis, Captain Wallis's brother. Both of them were characters. I'd say O.L. was a little more serious than Shorty, but not much.

I was amazed at the lack of cooperation between the sheriffs and the Patrol in Troop D. There were two exceptions, Glenn Hendrix in Greene County and George Hickham in Jasper County, but the rest didn't want anything to do with us. In Troop E I'd always enjoyed a very close working relationship with the sheriffs' departments. That's the only way you're going to achieve any positive results in fighting crime.

It was during the Springfield tour that I got shot. Oh, I've been shot at several times, but this was the only time I was ever hit.

The chain of events started on November 20, 1961, when a man named Bill Jenkins kidnapped Norwood Speight, the president of the White River Valley Electric Company in Branson. Jenkins lived on a bluff above Lake Taneycomo. He and the power company had been squabbling over the company's failure to provide electricity to the home, and Jenkins finally went off his rocker. He abducted Speight at gunpoint and took him out to the woods near Jenkins' home and forced him to cut down a tree. "Just wanted to prove to you that you can do it," announced Jenkins.

Evidently one of the company's objections to running electricity to the home was the many trees, which would have to be felled to install lines.

Jenkins returned Speight to Branson, and Speight immediately went to the police. Meanwhile Bill Jenkins returned to his home, sent his wife and children away, and barricaded himself inside with several rifles, shotguns, and pistols, and a sizeable quantity of ammunition.

It was the afternoon of November 21 before we could assemble our "task force," such as it was, composed of several state troopers, the Taney County sheriff and his deputies, and some city marshals. We even borrowed an armored car from the Larimore Company in Springfield. The plan was to send in foot patrols and surround the place. Then, we'd drive the armored car right up to the house and fire tear gas shells through the windows, after which the patrols would move in and capture Jenkins.

What appeared to be a sound plan turned into a fiasco. First, the weather played a hand. A driving rainstorm set in, making the road muddy, and the armored car became stuck before it got anywhere near the house. A deputy sheriff who knew Jenkins tried to talk him into coming out, but he refused. We had several portable floodlights with us, and Sheriff Wade decided we'd illuminate the house with those and try to fire gas shells from on foot. Lieutenant J.C. Smith and I were opposed to this because the lights would only provide Jenkins with targets. Our whole plan had been predicated on the use of the armored car and we'd lost it. Besides we had only three gas shells. But, the sheriff prevailed and on a given signal the lights came on.

I was on the west side of the house and the first shot Jenkins fired struck me in the right hand, breaking my thumb and injuring my index finger and wrist. I yelled to J.C. that I'd been hit. He fired his gas



*Lt. Herbert F. Wickham, 1962.*

gun but his aim was high. The shot cleared the roof by a comfortable margin. His second shot hit just underneath a window.

I was out in the open wearing one of those damned yellow raincoats and I decided to make a hasty withdrawal. I was running for cover when I came to a fallen tree. I tried to jump over it, but only made it part of the way and got caught. Jenkins let me have it again and he hit the last part going out the gate, as they say. A deputy was carrying the third gas shell. He tossed it toward J.C. Smith, but it hit a rock and rolled up by the house. where Jenkins peppered it with buckshot.

Jenkins crossed to the other side of the house and fired at the officers over there. we heard Sheriff Wade yell, "I'm hit! Help me!" No serious damage was done, but I imagine those buckshot restricted his sex life for a few weeks.

We withdrew temporarily, then regrouped and went back in the following morning, accompanied by armored reconnaissance cars and a detail of national guardsmen. We fired gas shells into the house, but it had little effect on Jenkins, who ran from window to window blasting away at everything that moved. There was little more we could do but return his fire. After a few minutes the shots from the house ceased. We found Jenkins dead inside.

It was a shame it had to end that way. People who knew the man said he was a heck of a nice fellow before his mind started to go.

The first shooting scrape I had occurred March 9, 1940. Two boys from Memphis, Tennessee, had been stealing expensive cars from parking lots and driving them north to Chicago, where a brother of one of them worked as a captain of bellhops at a big hotel. The three would alter the identification numbers and change the appearance of the cars by repainting or adding trim and then selling them.

On this particular night, the two came north in a stolen car that played out on them on South Spring Street on Toll Gate Hill in Cape Girardeau. They walked to the business district and there in the alley by the Orpheum Theater they found a brand new Oldsmobile with the keys in it. It belonged to a car salesman named Crites. They took the car and headed back south for some reason.

I'd been alerted by Troop E radio about the theft, and when the car came by my parking spot I wheeled that old Chevy in behind them. I'd never have caught them if they hadn't been slowed by show traffic leaving Lilbourn a couple of miles south of New Madrid. As I drew close, the kid riding on the right-hand side started shooting at me. One of the bullets shattered the left ventilator window. I swung the car out to the left and behind them and took a shot of my own. The bullet went through the back glass and hit the driver. They skidded off the road and into the ditch. I slid to a halt, jumped out, and waded through waist-deep water to get them out.

Later the doctor in New Madrid examined the boy I'd shot. "You've shot him twice." he said.

"Can't be," I said. "I only fired one shot."

"Well, by God, look here. There's two holes."

He was right. Then he probed for the slugs and we discovered the answer to the mystery. When that bullet hit the back window of the car, it split on the isinglass. Half of it lodged against his spine, and the other half stuck in his neck just under the skin. I still have those pieces of lead somewhere around here in the house. That boy took infection in those wounds and nearly died. Dr. Seibert at Jackson operated and found a piece of the boy's shirt embedded in the back wound.

A few months later I received a letter from the boy, who had made a full recovery. He said he appreciated what I'd done, because it set him on the straight and narrow, that I'd taught him a lesson. That's a rough way to learn.

I recall another adventure that occurred in the late 1940s. Howard Turnbull, who later became director of Revenue, was then a trooper working in Troop G, Willow Springs. His sister, who lived in Flat River, had her car stolen one night. I was sitting in my patrol car in New Madrid at the same spot where the previous chase began, when I received a radio report of the theft. I copied the vehicle description and license number, closed my notebook, and looked up to see a car going south on Highway 61 that matched the description of the stolen one. I flicked my spotlight on the license and saw that the last three digits matched the report. I started after the car.

When the thief saw the red light, he sped up, and the chase was on. I tried to pull up beside him, but he weaved over and tried to force me off the road. We kept going for 15 miles like that 'til we reached Pemiscot County. Just over the line he slowed for traffic. I goosed it and got alongside him. He whipped the car over toward me again, trying to ditch me.

I could see there was only one way to stop him, so I drew my pistol and aimed through the open right-hand window of my car. I fired and hit him in the head, but the

bullet didn't penetrate his skull. It plowed a groove around the left side and back of his head. It didn't kill him, but it knocked him sillier 'n hell! His car went off the right shoulder and came to rest in the ditch. I jumped out, laid him on his belly, and handcuffed him. A friend of mine from Portageville happened by and helped direct traffic.

At the Portageville jail the thief, a young black man of 20, proceeded to tell me his rights. He knew 'em all. Then, he told a hairy tale. It seems he'd been held in slavery in the state of Mississippi under the most brutal of conditions. It was a true story, evidently, because the FBI were after the people who'd mistreated him.

The story hit the papers in a big way. I remember the piece in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, quite sympathetic to the fellow. Well, now, he may have been treated cruelly, but he was trying to kill me out there with that car, so I didn't feel too sorry for him. And to top it all off, the Patrol raised hell with me because I'd shot the window out of Howard Turnbull's sister's car!

I've lost close to 50 pounds since I retired from the Patrol in 1966. I weighed 206 then and only 150 now. No, it wasn't illness or dieting; I just got off my can and went to work rebuilding and remodeling this house. It's over 75 years old. There's an upstairs apartment exactly like the downstairs. We used to rent half of the house, but don't anymore. Got tired of the noise.

My wife and boy, Herb, Jr., did most of the paintings you see on the walls. They're both talented and sell their work regularly. My son teaches art in Jackson and has developed many fine artists."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Lieutenant Herbert F. Wickham died on March 9, 1996.)*

# ROBERT E. “NOOKIE” LEE

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*Blessed with perhaps the most provocative nickname in the history of the Missouri State Highway Patrol, Nookie Lee can put more words on a 60-minute cassette tape than anyone I know. His sense of humor is more rambunctious than his brother, Herb's, but no less engaging.*

“When the Patrol hired me as a weight inspector in 1943, all I knew about the job was that it had something to do with trucks. I'd never fooled with a truck in my life that I didn't get dirty. I told my wife, Wildah Mae, “I've got to get me some work clothes.” I went to town and bought several pairs of striped overalls and blue denim work shirts and reported to Sergeant George Pate at Post F-1, the scale house at Kingdom City, in my new duds. Imagine my surprise when I found out I could wear slacks and a sport shirt, and that I didn't have to crawl around and get dirty at all, just sit in the scale house and weigh trucks. I was in hog heaven.

Facilities were primitive then in the weigh station, which was a little bitty building. I sat on a milk stool until I scrounged up a barber chair, but they made me take it out. They were afraid I was cutting hair on the side, I guess. Later I located some secondhand cane-bottomed chairs and a rocker or two, repaired them at home, and put them in the scale house. We had a radio receiver, but no transmitter, so whenever I had to call Troop F Headquarters in Jefferson City, I used the telephone. Of course filing cabinets were unheard of. What few papers and books were needed, we stored in pasteboard boxes and orange crates. There was no inside plumbing, either. In a pinch you hiked up the hill to the blackberry patch. But we didn't



*Weight Inspector Robert E.  
“Nookie” Lee*

think of it as difficult. The job was what you made it and everybody looked out for everybody else.

If you saw somebody fouling up, you called him aside and said, “Hey, boy, you better shape up. You're making us look bad.”

My monthly take-home pay was \$108, out of a total salary of \$125. Heck, the troopers didn't make much more. There were three officers in the area, all stationed in Columbia: George Pate, Dave Conyers, and J. T. Jones, and one other weight inspector. I'll call him Smitty (not his real name, but I have my reasons, which I'll reveal later). There were no officers stationed in Fulton or Mexico, and the next town east of Columbia on Highway 40 with troopers living in it was Wentzville. Of course I-70 was just somebody's dream then.

For the first year Smitty and I worked opposite shifts, eight in the morning until six in the evening, and six in the evening until four in the morning. I'd take my rifle to work with me sometimes on the night shift and shoot four or five young rabbits behind the scale house. Then, I'd dress



*This photo of the Kingdom City weigh station was taken June 14, 1948.*



them and take them up to Kate's restaurant and we'd have a midnight lunch of fried rabbit, gravy, and hot biscuits. There'd be troopers, weight clerks, and truck drivers at the table, all enjoying the meal and glad to get it, because nobody had any money.

All my training was on the job. Pate gave me some law books and policy manuals, and I plowed through them trying to achieve some understanding with my eighth grade education. Hell, I got so mired down in "to wit" and "notwithstanding" and "habeas corpus," I wanted to throw those books away. But I did the best I could, and when I ran into something I couldn't understand, I asked Smitty and even consulted the truck drivers, who were very helpful. Eventually, I learned the bus and truck laws. As a matter of fact, people still call the house with questions about licensing and so on. If I'm, not sure of the answer, I call the scale house, but most of the time I can answer their questions. When I told Pate about consulting the truck drivers for their opinions on policies and laws, he liked the idea. "I never thought of doing it that way, but it sounds good," he said.

Smitty had his problems, family or something, and began drinking heavily—both at home and at work. He even turned his old Chevrolet over a couple of times between Fulton and Kingdom City. One night about a year after I'd started working, David Conyers came to the house.

"Nookie, I'm on a spot," he said. "Smitty's drunker than hell out there at the scale house. He can't even sit up straight at the beam. This is the second time it's happened, and Pate told me if I caught him again and didn't report him, he'd fire me."

"Dave," I said, "it's doesn't look like you have any choice. You can't lose your job over a drunk."

They let Smitty go.

Pate questioned me afterwards. "Did you know Smitty was drinking?" he asked.

"Yes, I did."

"Why didn't you report him?"

"Sergeant, you didn't hire me to report drunks. You hired me to weigh trucks." I said.

"Did you know not reporting him could cost you your job?" he said.

"I was looking for a job when I got this one, sergeant. I'm not going to squeal on nobody."

"How'd you know Smitty was drinking?" Pate continued.

I pointed north, behind the weigh station. "Walk up that hill and count the empty half-pint bottles. And, did you ever notice how he kept his mouth full of Sen-Sen all the time? He didn't chew them because he liked them; they helped hide the scent of liquor on his breath."

With Smitty gone they turned the weigh scale operation over to me. "Make your own damned schedule and run it the way you want to," Pate said.

I worked some weird hours for a few years. Wildah Mae reported to her job at three in the afternoon and for a while we just passed and said "hi" coming and going. I tried to zero in on the violations and keep the truck drivers guessing as to when the scale house would be open. I might start my shift at midnight, or noon, or early in the morning.

Captain Harry Hansen, the commanding officer of Troop F, didn't know what was going on. He'd call F-1, expecting it to be open and get no answer. He questioned Pate, who was the only one with my schedule.

"George, why isn't that scale house operating?" Hansen said.

"Don't worry about it. It's operating. You're getting your reports regularly, aren't you?" said Pate.

"Well, yeah," admitted Hansen. "the reports are coming in."

They left me alone after that.

When I started, trucks weren't even required to have brake lights and you should have seen the taillights. Big trucks would be going down the road with one little tail-light about the size of the clearance lights on the cabs of today's trucks. I encouraged the drivers to install more lights. When you're driving down the highway, it's nice if you can recognize an oncoming truck and give it room. It was especially important back then on the narrow, two-lane roads.

Red Flaherty, who ran a service station nearby, told me, "Nookie, you've made me more money than anyone that's been over there. I'm putting lights on those trucks like you wouldn't believe."

People really appreciated the Patrol's help then. Once a month an announcement ran in the local newspaper. "The Highway Patrol and Fulton Police Department will hold a safety check next Saturday in front of the Fulton City Hall." Patrol officers J.T. Jones, Conyers, and Pate, and Bates Huddleston and Keeley Breid of the police department would inspect the cars. Practically everybody who owned a vehicle in the area came through. The officers wrote a sackful of blue warnings, but rarely did they arrest anybody. It was a service and people were glad to take advantage of it.

Citizens, especially the kids, should regard the police as their friends and not be afraid of them. I think some representative of the law enforcement community should speak once a month in each school to acquaint young people with the law and to get to know them on a more personal basis. Law officers should be the kids' friends and not be sneaking around cor-

ners trying to catch them doing something wrong.

Everyone always said that we had a closeness and spirit of cooperation between the weigh clerks and troopers at Kingdom City that was unmatched anywhere in the state. Doc Harris, who joined me as an inspector in 1948, and I tried to create an atmosphere where everyone sat down and talked about his work and any problems he was having. We learned from the troopers and they learned from us, and what difference did it make that they wore blue uniforms and we wore brown? We were all enforcing the same laws. It was like one big family and, as in all families; we had our differences, but what better way to clear the air than a good argument?

I got along fine with every sergeant I worked under. I guess the smartest supervisor I ever had was Pappy Dix. When he was transferred from Neosho to our zone

in 1948, I'd never met him, though I'd heard nothing but good things about him. But, when he drove up and walked inside F-1 the first time, I had misgivings, to say the least. There was no describing the condition of his uniform, and as he puffed away on that old smelly pipe he always held between his teeth, I thought, my God, is this what we've inherited?

First impressions are often wrong; I can honestly say I never worked for a more intelligent, conscientious, even-tempered man. You never knew it when he was mad; though I'm confident things get under his skin now and then. He could relate to people from all stations of life, high and low, and speak their language.

We had fun at F-1, and I was the butt of most of the jokes from 1943 to 1976, I guess. They were always pulling something on me. One day I got a call to help a sick man off a bus across the highway. When I arrived, I discovered the man



*(left to right) Weight Inspector Robert E. "Nookie" Lee stands with Trooper O.C. Shepers, and Weight Inspector J.D. "Doc" Harris.*

wasn't sick—he was dead, deader than a doorknob—and he was on the top level of a double-deck bus. Not only that, he weighed about 300 pounds! Three of us, with me in the middle, managed to cart him off, but I was down in the back for several days. I ought to sue Greyhound yet. My back started acting up again the other day.

I was always a hell raiser. I fought the system for 33 years and got in trouble doing it occasionally. When Jim Blair was lieutenant governor of Missouri in the late 1940s and early 1950s, he used to stop at the scale house and loaf. One day he and I and Trooper Tillie Cameron were sitting there and Jim said, "Hey, Uncle Lee, that's a good shirt you got on there." He was referring to my uniform shirt, which we'd started wearing a few years before.

"It ought to be, Jim," I said. "It cost me \$16 or \$17." They were custom-made, you know.

You could hear him holler "What!" for 10 miles. "My God!" he exclaimed, "this nice white dress shirt I'm wearing only cost me nine dollars. Sixteen or seventeen dollars? Why, that's ridiculous."

"Wait a minute," I said, "Don't you quote me. I don't want to get in a wrangle over uniforms. I've had enough problems lately. I've got a witness here (Tillie) who will swear you were doing all the talking. Just let it stay in the scale house, okay?"

His shirttail never touched his back until he was over in Jefferson City talking to everybody about the high cost of our uniforms. Colonel Hugh Waggoner soon heard about it and hit the ceiling. A few days later a directive was issued to the effect that "Anyone criticizing the uniform or its price would be subject to disciplinary action."

I never had a better friend than Hugh Waggoner, who knew all along that I was

the one who had talked to Jim Blair. The next time I was in Jefferson City, I stopped by Waggoner's office. "Colonel, I only quoted the price of the shirt. I didn't criticize the uniform. I only told the truth, and if you'll be honest, \$17 is too much for a weight clerk to give for a shirt to wear crawling around under a truck." He didn't disagree.

In the early days we still had the justices of the peace, who weren't full-time judges, just elected officials who had other jobs and held court when necessary. Justice Robinson in Kingdom City heard cases in his home at night, and by day wherever he happened to be on his farm. Sometimes it would be in his barn, or if he was disking or plowing, he and I and the truck driver would sit down on the plow beam with the mules and have court right there in the cornfield. If the trucker wanted a receipt, Robinson turned the little pink summons over and wrote on the back: "You were found guilty by this court and fined X amount of dollars." Then the truck driver and I drove back to the scale house in my 1936 Ford and the justice continued his plowing.

Speaking of court, I remember something that happened while Hugh P. Williamson was the prosecuting attorney of Callaway County during the mid-'40s. I was training Martin Bryant, a new inspector who had just been discharged from the armed forces after serving in World War II. Old man Dave Clay, who hauled corn to cattle feeders all around the county, came across the scales. His license allowed him a gross weight of 22,000 pounds, but he was 2,000 pounds over. He was a couple thousand over on his rear axle, too, but I couldn't see making two charges. "Dave," I said, "if you correct your axle, we'll arrest you for only the one charge." He shifted his load off the axle, Trooper Poodle Breid made out the ticket, and I thought we'd heard the last of it.



Two or three weeks later the phone rang at F-1. It was Hugh P. Williamson, the prosecutor. "We're going to have a trial on Dave Clay," he announced.

Martin, Poodle, and I, armed with our arrest reports and log sheets showing the truck weights, went to the courthouse in Fulton on the appointed day. Hugh P. met us at the door. "I'll tell you something, young fellows," he said. "I'm doing something today that I've never done before. In this trial I will act as prosecutor and also represent Mr. Clay, the defendant."

Now, I'm no authority on legal procedure, but I don't know how he could do that. Only Hugh P. Williamson would have the guts to try it!

I said to Poodle, "Gather up your reports and let's get out of here. We've lost this one."

That Hugh P. was a dandy. Used to keep his old Great Dane in the courtroom while he heard cases. One thing about him, though, it was *his* courtroom. He never, never let a defense attorney browbeat a witness. If the attorney started to get rough, Williamson would say, "Now, hold on. You can talk to this man better than that. That sort of behavior will not be tolerated in my court." When one of the Van Matre brothers from Mexico had a client who was arrested in Callaway County, they'd usually take a change of venue, because they weren't allowed to use the tactics in Hugh P.'s court that they used other places.

Old Hugh P. was different, but he was a fine man. Few knew about the goodness that he did. He raised a tremendous vegetable patch and gave away large quantities every year. Sometimes he'd go back to the person and expect his wife to cook the vegetables, so he could eat them, but all-in-all, Hugh was a likeable guy.

I mentioned Poodle Breid earlier. One night he and I arrested a young driver from Boonville for being overweight on his

truck axle. We asked him to shift his load and he turned belligerent and vulgar, refused to touch the load, and left in a huff. When he came back later, we tried to talk to him again and he lost his temper. He punched Poodle in the mouth and took off running down the shoulder of Highway 40. Poodle scrambled after him, running a poor second, fell down, tore both knees out of his trousers, and skinned the palms of his hands. Breid returned empty-handed, panting and bleeding, and I couldn't help laughing.

"Poodle," I said, "you ought to have known better. That boy is too young for you to catch. You've been around too long to be running races."

One winter night Pappy Dix and I were sitting in front of the scales when a tractor-trailer pulled onto the scale platform. The rig was covered with ice and snow and his gross weight was about 6,000 pounds too heavy. "My God, look here, Sarge," I said.

Dix chewed on his pipe a few seconds and studied the scale reading. "Pretty heavy, isn't he?" he drawled.

I told the driver to pull over and come inside. "Fellow, your truck is terribly overweight," I said.

He looked shocked. Then he said, politely, "I can't buy that." He handed me a weight ticket from Alabama where he'd loaded his cargo. The ticket showed his truck weight as considerably less than I had weighed it. In fact, if the figures on the ticket were true, he was legal in Missouri.

"I'm sorry. All I can go by is what I've weighed you at, and you're over by plenty," I said.

"Did you take into consideration the amount of ice that's accumulated on the truck?" he asked.

"There's no way I could do that without knocking it off and reweighing you. But

even so, I can't believe you could have that much ice on your truck."

"Would you give me the opportunity to dig the slush off and reweigh?" said the driver.

I turned to Dix. "What do you think, Sarge?" He nodded his OK.

The truck driver walked across the highway to Don Tenney's truck stop, borrowed a sledgehammer and wrecking bar, and went to work banging and prying that ice off the truck. It was encrusted underneath, on top, and on the sides. We sat there in the scale house and chuckled over his efforts, but the pile of ice grew until the stuff was heaped all around his rig. It looked like somebody had cleaned out a stock rack.

"I'm ready to reweigh now," the driver announced finally.

He pulled onto the platform and Dix and I couldn't believe our eyes. The truck weighed 200 or 300 pounds less than it had in Alabama. The fellow had been hauling about three tons of ice and snow on the outside of his truck!

"Well, Sarge, I've learned something tonight," I told Pappy. From then on, when we had winter storms and the trucks started building up accumulations of ice and slush, I closed the scales.

My mother once told me, "Experience is a dear teacher, but it's a good one." I got my experience in 33 years of associating with all types of people: policemen, truck drivers, drunks, pimps, whores, preachers, nuns, Lord knows what else. They all came through the scale house with their problems. I didn't learn near enough, though; I'm still too ornery to live, but I've enjoyed every minute of it.

I spend most of my time now doing anything I want to. I fish and hunt and don't work at all anymore. I used to tend bar at the bowling alley three nights a week to help buy gas, but I gave that up.

That's what's hurting retired folks, you know, those high gas prices.

I went out the other day to drive my truck downtown and noticed my license plate had expired. Isn't that something? I work all my life arresting people for expired registrations and I let mine run out. I just hadn't driven it all winter and forgot completely about it.

I see some of the troopers now and then — Cal Price, Donnie Schmitz, Bill Baker — and Wildah Mae and I socialize with Slick Slevin and his wife regularly. We attended a Highway Patrol Christmas party recently ... I got about half drunk and had a hell of a time!"

*(Note: This interview took place in 1980. Retired Weight Inspector Robert E. "Nookie" Lee died March 15, 1984, at the age of 69.)*

# HERBERT “HERB” WALKER

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*Stationed in Lee's Summit for his entire 29-year career, Herb Walker was the second member of his family to join the Patrol, his brother Fred having died at the hands of two gunmen in 1941. A member of the first drivers' examination class in 1952 and one of the first radar operators in 1959, Herb retired as a zone sergeant in 1972. He still lives in Lee's Summit, retaining an active interest in community affairs, sports, fishing, and gardening.*

"In 1943, my wife, Allene, my son, Charlie, and I lived on McKinley Street in Hannibal. I drove a city bus for a living. Sergeant Russell Minor of the Missouri Highway Patrol was a neighbor and close friend. He suggested that I apply for the Patrol. I'd always been conscious of my size, I should say that lack of it, and didn't think I was heavy enough to qualify. You had to weigh 150 pounds. But, I applied and just squeaked by the weight minimum at 152 pounds.

Our recruit class numbered only 12 members and began training in August. We attended school for two weeks in Jefferson City, returned home for a weekend, then came back for a final two, before going to work on the road.

We recruits lived in a house on Dunklin Street; school was conducted at a junior high school in a room on the west side of the building. Air conditioning was unheard of then, except in movie theaters, and by the late afternoon, we were sitting in pools of perspiration. One afternoon an instructor, Lieutenant K.K. Johnson, got up and read about a bank robbery at Hawk Point. The subject was dry, the students were hot and tired, and K.K. lost everybody after about five minutes. Finally, he stopped reading.



*Tpr. Herbert Walker*

"OK, write up a detailed report about everything I've just read," he snapped.

That brought us out of it, but nobody could remember much of anything about the robbery. All I could recall was that the robbers tried to cross the Missouri River on a ferryboat unsuccessfully during their getaway. So, I filled a page or two with this part of the episode. I don't know what the other guys wrote.

This was during wartime and we had several blackouts. These were drills in preparation for enemy air attacks. A siren sounded and you were supposed to turn off all lights and close window shades 'til the all-clear signal sounded. Dave Conyers was in the class, and Dave was, and probably still is, goosey. If you sneak up and touch him, he goes wild.

One night during a blackout, the guys got to tormenting Dave. They'd creep up on him in the darkness, tickle him, and he'd thrash around for a while, throwing objects and knocking things over. Then, it

would quiet down only to erupt again a few seconds later. At last the all clear sounded and we turned the lights on. Dave was gone.

"Is he outside?" somebody asked.

"Don't think so."

"Here I am, you son of a guns," said Dave from under a bed. "This is the only safe place I could find."

Following graduation I was assigned to Troop A, working out of the headquarters at Lee's Summit. Our uniforms hadn't arrived when we started, so we went to work in civilian clothes. We were riding with a veteran officer and observing, so it didn't matter. Otto Viets was the troop commanding officer then. He had the new men ride with all the officers in the area to give them a broader base of experience, a good practice. I recall riding with Herb Brigham, Shelton Abney, and Bob Davis.

Troop A was much larger then, extending all the way north to the Iowa line. St. Joseph, Bethany, Maryville, and Cameron had one or more troopers living there, but otherwise, there was nobody north of the Missouri river in Troop A. There probably weren't over 28 or 29 officers assigned to the entire troop.

We worked 10-hour days, with three days off each month and one weekend a quarter. We also received a few days yearly vacation. There were only two shifts, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and 6:00 to 4 a.m. Usually it was daylight before you reached home after the night shift.

My family stayed in Hannibal a few days before joining me in Lee's Summit. By then I'd ridden around a little and thought I knew the area. Captain Viets must have thought so, too, because he allowed Trooper W. L. Hutchings (one of my classmates) and me to pick up my wife and boy at Union Station in Kansas

City, during our work shift in a patrol car. We started west on U. S. Highway 50. We knew we had to turn north eventually to reach the train station, but neither of us saw a familiar street.

"Uh-oh" said Hutch, "I think we'd better turn around."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

He pointed at the sign ahead. It read, "Entering Kansas."

When I joined the Patrol, you rode with a partner. The only time you rode alone was when your partner was on leave or vacation. I've always thought two-man cars are best. They're definitely safer and at an accident scene, one man can gather information while the other directs traffic. Bob Davis, later commanding officer of Troop H at St. Joseph, always said that if he had only two men on duty, he'd have them in the same car. I agree.

Most of our patrol cars were Chevrolets. For years afterward they formed the bulk of the fleet. They were cheaper to buy and operate, but they wouldn't run very fast. Seventy miles per hour, and that downhill with a long run, was the top speed. Of course the speed limit during wartime was only 35 mph, and most people observed it. If they didn't they ran the risk of losing their gas rationing card.

When anybody wanted to outrun us, though, they usually could. Elbert Nash and I were on Highway 40 just east of Kansas City one night. An Oldsmobile came flying out of a tavern parking lot right in front of us, squealing tires and fishtailing. I hit the red light button and the guy in the Olds poured the coals to that Rocket-8 engine. Orange smoke belched out as we watched his taillights disappear over the hill on 31st Street west of Van Brunt Boulevard in Kansas City.



We radioed the Kansas City Police, who took up the chase. It ended with an accident on Holmes Street, miles from where we'd first sighted the car. They picked the guys up later at a bus stop.

Another night in the late 1940s, an inmate from the state school for delinquent boys at Boonville stole a truck and headed west on Highway 40. He side-swiped an Oldsmobile, whose driver then dropped in behind and followed him. A Troop F officer picked up the chase, but couldn't keep up with either vehicle. Another of our officers, Ernest Van Winkle, tried to catch the truck at Higginsville, but the escapee outran him, too. The Olds paced the truck at a safe distance.

Ed Butler and I were working near Lee's Summit. We were patrolling in separate cars; I in a Ford, and he in a Chevrolet. The Ford wasn't very fast, but it would outrun the Chevy, so Ed got his .351-caliber rifle and climbed in with me. We drove to Oak Grove. Van Winkle had stayed in the chase and kept us posted on the truck's location, even though all he could see were receding taillights.

As the truck approached us, I pulled out and made a running start and dropped in behind him. I was afraid that if he got too much lead, he might outdistance us, but the two vehicles would run about the same speed. I attempted to pull alongside several times but he'd veer over and force me to brake.

Finally, Ed poked his rifle out the side window and squeezed off a few rounds at the tires. With each shot debris would fly off the truck and smack against the patrol car. Just west of Grain Valley, a slug blew out a tire and the truck went off the road. It turned end over end several times before coming to rest on the pavement. The truck was a total wreck, but the escapee had only a few scratches. We pulled him out and took him to the parental home in Kansas City. He was returned to Boonville

the next day. That night he stole another truck and escaped again! He went east that time, though.

Those old Chevys of the 1940s were equipped with underseat heaters that worked fine for a year. After that, you froze. I've worked when there were only two little clear spots on the windshield where the heater was blowing away the frost. Everything else was covered. Naturally the temperature inside the car hovered around freezing. You'd wear all the clothes you could get on, but it was still frigid.

One night Trooper Bob Place and I were riding together and the heater quit. We limped over to the Highway Department Building in Kansas City where they kept a janitor working all night. Bob took the heater out, repaired it, and off we went to finish our tour of duty.

The few Fords we drove had better heaters, but the bodies weren't very tight. They had cracks under the doors, and so were drafty and noisy. But, when you consider that the officers in the early 30s patrolled with the tops down, I guess we didn't have it so bad.

I always patrolled in a car, but we did have to learn to ride a motorcycle in recruit school. Our class, taught by Sergeant H.A. Hansen from Jefferson City, consisted of riding at low speed around a high school track and the Troop F driveway. Pretty sedate, but even so John Crow had an accident and mashed his thumb. "Scoop" Usher, a former policeman, was the only member of the class who had ridden a 'cycle before.

Speaking of motorcycles, they used to tell this story about Trooper Jim Judkins, who in idle moments, took to riding his 'cycle over the earthen equipment behind the shooting range at Troop A Headquarters. Captain Baxter was walking by the range one day and noticed the tracks

crisscrossing the sod. He summoned Jim to the office.

"Judkins, what are you doin' ridin' that cycle on the range?"

Jim was dumbfounded, "Why ... how'd you know it was me, Captain?"

"Cause you're the only man I've got that's crazy enough to do anything like that!"

Bob Place rode a Highway Patrol motorcycle to and from the Troop A office. Sometimes he'd put his wife, Kay, and the kids in the sidecar and take them for a ride around the neighborhood.

Bob arrested a great big drunken railroad worker one time. I don't know if Bob had forgotten his handcuffs or what, but he had the guy trussed up with a rope, just like a rodeo calf when he brought him to the office.

Place still dreams about working the road, and for some reason his dreams are usually about fighting. Last fall in the middle of one of those nightmares he swung a haymaker, connected with the headboard of the bed, and broke his hand. I dream about patrolling too, but never about fighting—probably because I never had many fights, just a few scuffles. I wasn't big enough to hurt anybody, anyway.

Officers were much freer to do what they wanted in the early '40s. There were no supervisors in the field at all. You had the troop commander, who was a captain, and the troop sergeant, who performed the duties now done by the lieutenants. They spent virtually all their time at headquarters. When things were quiet on the night shift we would sometimes go to the 40 Highway Drive-In Theater and watch the show. The proprietors liked to see us there, so they'd let us in free. We'd drop

by fairs and football and baseball games, too. I've always felt that this sort of thing was OK, if not done excessively. It places you before the public and helps generate good will toward the department.

To show you how little activity we had then compared to now, Sergeant Herb Holt worked in the office, and besides answering the telephone, one of his duties was preparing troop reports. He typed descriptive arrest reports and accident reports and even drew the diagram reconstructing the accident. He probably averaged 10 or 12 reports each evening.

Herb also wrote up a summary of stolen cars, which he distributed among the road officers. Their seeming indifference to the report indicated to Herb that nobody was reading it.

"Let's just cut out that summary," he suggested to Captain Viets. "They don't pay any attention to it anyway." But, Viets made him continue the report.

Holt decided he'd prove his point. At the bottom of the next day's summary, he typed, "Anybody reading this can collect a dime from Herb Holt." Shelton Abney was the only guy who collected in the whole troop.

The judges were justices of the peace then, employed by the township. There were three in Jackson County, one at Blue Springs, another near Kansas City on U.S. 50, and another in Independence. The only decent courtroom was in Independence; the others were unkempt and shabby. I hated to take people I'd arrested inside them. The justice received the court costs from each case, so he was always happy to see you with a traffic violator.

Judge Brady at Independence was a fine judge, but he believed a trooper should never lose his temper, no matter what the provocation. Brady kept his temper in check pretty well, too, except for one thing; if a defendant called his court a

“kangaroo” or “jackrabbit” court, he’d hit the ceiling. One night I brought a fellow in who had become intoxicated and stalled his car in the roadway, blocking traffic. As the judge reviewed the charge, the motorist uttered the fatal words, along with some choice obscenities.

“Did you say what I thought you said?” asked Judge Brady. “Well, if you did, you’d better not repeat it!”

He did and paid for it with a night in jail and a fine to boot.

I was involved in very little criminal work, so most of my memories are of accidents and chases ... traffic-related activities. In 29 years on the Patrol I never shot at anybody, nor did anyone shoot at me. In fact, only once did I have a gun pulled on me, and that was a mistake. One night Elbert Nash and I recovered a stolen car owned by the operator of The Old Plantation, a tavern on U.S. Highway 40. The thieves abandoned the car just down the road from the tavern, so we decided to return it to the owner. I drove the stolen automobile, with Nash following in the patrol car.

Meanwhile the owner hitched a ride with a friend and saw me in his car. In the darkness he mistook me for the thief and, as they pulled alongside, motioned me to drive to the shoulder. The owner jumped out and pointed a pistol at me. I did some fast-talking and convinced him I was a state trooper just as Nash drove up. I’ve always thought it was a good thing that I was able to calm the man when I did, because Nash might have shot him when he saw the gun.

In 1952, I volunteered for the first driver license examination school at Sedalia. The week-long course was taught by two fellows from Florida and Oklahoma, states which had adopted the program previously. This job lacked the excitement of the road, but it was strictly day work with most weekends and all holidays off.

Nowadays civilian driver examiners conduct the tests, but when we started, troopers did everything, including the written and driving tests. At the start our facilities usually weren’t the best. We gave written tests in Judge Smith’s courtroom in Harrisonville. Later we moved to the waiting room outside. That was worse because there were always a bunch of courthouse loafers lounging around in your way. They thought they had more right to be there than you did—and they may have been right!

One day in Butler a guy drove in for his driver’s test in a dead animal truck. He smelled worse than the truck—really ripe! Everybody else was busy, so I had to ride with him during the examination. After a couple of blocks I decided he could drive just fine, and we high-tailed it back to the examination station.

In 1957, the legislature set a speed limit of 70 mph for federal highways. The Patrol purchased Dodge radar cars to enforce the new limit. Previously, we’d had one car, operated statewide by Trooper Bob Burgess. Now, we had a car for each troop. I was one of the officers selected to attend the three-day school at Rolla to learn how to operate the radar.

On those first cars the radar was mounted in the trunk. A section was cut out of the trunk lid and covered with fiberglass, through which the radar beam passed. We’d park our cars on the shoulder at a slight angle to check speeds on vehicles going both directions.

As I had the only radar car in the area, I worked all over the troop. I had practically no problems with prosecution of speeding cases. Presented with the evidence that the radar speedmeter had checked his car at a given speed, the motorist usually just plead guilty. Once in a great while, a person in trouble with points on his license would contest the case, but generally it was cut and dried.

I've had some wild rides. One day Shelton Abney and I were working radar together out of one car down on Missouri Highway 35 (now Highway 7) when a guy came through at 100 mph. Shelton was driving, and he was a fellow who wouldn't quit in a chase. If there was any chance to catch a violator, he'd take it.

We were barreling down the highway after the speeder at 100 plus when we popped over a hill and there in the road facing us was a farmer who had pulled over in our lane to make a left turn onto a gravel road. Abney didn't slow up a bit. I thought we'd hit the car for sure, but at the last possible second, the farmer turned and we slipped by. We caught the speeder a couple of miles down the road. Later I mentioned to Shelton that I thought he'd cut it a little close back there with the farmer.

"Well, I couldn't stop," he explained, "and if he hadn't gotten out of the way, I'd never have missed him. So, I figured, what the hell? We'll just keep going." That was Shelton.

Abney chased five burglars all the way from Odessa to Kansas City one night back in the late 1940s. Shelton was at home in Warrensburg, off-duty, when Herb Holt phoned and said troopers were chasing a car west on Highway 40 in Saline County. Abney didn't have time to get into his uniform; he just threw on his parka, grabbed his gun, and headed north on 131 to Odessa. He jumped the car there and the chase was on.

Bill Barton was trying to catch them, too, but his Chevy heated up and he had to drop out, but Shelton drove a Ford and he could stay with the fugitives, who were in an Oldsmobile. Old Highway 40 had some wicked curves, and if you didn't know the road, you could get into trouble pretty fast. East of Grain Valley there was a bridge over the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio railroad. You went into the bridge on a

curve and hit another one just after crossing it. The guy driving the Olds slid sideways on the bridge and scraped the railing almost the entire span, showing sparks all over the pavement.

"I thought for sure he'd lose it," Shelton said later, "but somehow he straightened the car up and crossed the bridge."

The Kansas City Police had a roadblock set up near 31st Street at the Blue River, but the fugitives ran it with Shelton close behind. The police later said Abney's Ford was leaning over so far on the curves that his wheel rims dragged the concrete pavement. Both rims trailed sparks like the tail of a comet.

As they approached Van Brunt Boulevard, Abney was able to pull alongside the Olds. "I could see they'd never stop for a roadblock," he said, "so I decided to knock them off the road with the patrol car." He succeeded in stopping them, but they came out fighting. "The police were there to help, but I soon broke free and stood back and let them thump those guys," said Abney. "See, I didn't have my uniform on, and my parka wasn't marked, so the officers couldn't tell me from the criminals. I was getting pounded as much as they were."

The incident received a big write-up in the Kansas City *Star*, and Shelton garnered an award for his actions. A ladies' flower club, motivated by civic pride, planted irises in the highway median where the chase ended. The club president wrote a letter of praise that Captain Viets read aloud at troop meeting. Abney took a terrific razzing from the men about those irises.

In 1959, I gave up the radar car and returned to regular road work. George Pate was captain of Troop A then. When Bob David was promoted to lieutenant, I was promoted to zone sergeant in his place, and served in this position 'til my retirement in 1972.



Captain Pate always insisted that the men fill up the front seats at a troop meeting. Now, when we go to a Patrol retirees' meeting, who heads for the back row? George Pate. I always kid him about that.

George was annoyed with officers who wrote memos and signed their badge numbers instead of their names. He'd been cracking down hard on the problem for a couple of weeks and thought everybody had the message, but some officer, I've forgotten who, slipped up and wrote his badge number for a signature. Pate fired it back to the offender with the scribbled message: "What's the matter? Can't you write your name?" and signed it "12," his badge number!

One time at a troop meeting they showed a childbirth film in living color. It amused some, but disturbed others. Sergeant Madison Roberts took it as long as he could. He rose from his seat to go outside for a little air, but made it only as far as the doorway, where he fainted. He was out cold. Lieutenant Dick Gehrig and I nearly died laughing; in fact most everybody thought it was funny except Captain Pate. We carted Roberts to a couch to revive.

Trooper Don Buehler was sitting there on the back row, looking miserable. "I'd have left too," he said, "but when I saw Roberts go down, I knew I couldn't make it, so I just stayed in my seat and watched."

Later we were kidding Roberts about fainting. "You know," he said, "it wasn't the picture that got me. It was that damned ether they were giving to that gal. I swear I could smell it!"

I mentioned the Troop A range earlier in the story about Judkins and Baxter. While George Pate was captain at Troop A, the range figured in another incident that must have happened in the mid-1960s.

Sergeant Lewis Murphy was a Boy Scout leader here in Lee's Summit. He



*Retired Sergeant Herb Walker, 1996.*

decided that the scouts could earn a little money for their troop by digging the lead from spent bullets out of the embankment at the back of the range and selling it. The only problem was, he didn't ask Captain Pate. One Saturday, Murphy brought the boys out and they spent the morning digging holes in the backstop and retrieving the lead. The embankment was pocked with holes. He soon found out that Murph was responsible and his scouts were back at the range filling the holes and resodding the bank. "You dug 'em. Now you fill 'em in," ordered Pate.

I remember Herb Brigham saying: "If you work for the Highway Patrol 10 years, you'll have a very liberal education."

I worked for 29 years and can truthfully say that all the people I worked with and all the folks I encountered on the highways were interesting. That's what I miss most in retirement, the people I had daily contact with. But, I wouldn't want to go back to work. I've truly enjoyed my retirement. I keep busy with my lawn and garden, and when I tire of those, there are several good fishing holes to visit."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Retired Sergeant Herb Walker died on February 10, 2001.)*

# HERBERT H. LEE

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*Possessor of a dry wit and a million stories, Herb Lee today resides with his wife Martha in Callaway County, where he worked for 23 years as a weight inspector for the Highway Patrol.*

"Come on in and sit down. What do you want to talk about? Fishing? Baseball? The Highway Patrol? What do you say we talk about all three? I'm leery of tape recorders, though, because of a little trick Trooper Ray Magruder pulled on me a year or so before I retired. We had completed a truck check down in Montgomery County and were riding north on Highway 19 near Montgomery City when he started asking me questions. I'd noticed the tape recorder on the seat of his patrol car when I climbed in, but forgot about it during our conversation.

The troop commander had issued orders telling us, for the 10th time, not to write more than one charge on each blue warning. If we warned a driver for having a defective headlight and for driving with an expired license plate, for instance, he wanted us to fill out two warning reports.

"Herb, did you write any doubles on those blues?" asked Ray.

"Oh, yeah, I do that all the time," I said.

We met a truck loaded with empty barrels. "I guess he's going to make some sorghum," commented Ray.

"Oh, hell no," I said. "That's an old bootlegger from Wellsville. He's taking those barrels to pick up some whiskey."

He kept cranking away, asking me questions just to make me cuss or say something ridiculous or criticize our super-



*Weight Inspector Herb Lee*

visors, until we reached the 54-19 junction east of Mexico. Then he rewound the tape and played out conversation.

"You mean you recorded that?" I said. We listened to that thing and laughed and laughed. I'll bet he's still got it. It was a mess—enough to get me fired.

My working career covered exactly 50 years, from 1923 to 1973, the last 23 as a weight inspector for the Highway Patrol. In all those years I was never unemployed, not even for one day. Things looked bad, though, in May of 1930 when the shoe factory where I worked here in Fulton closed. Martha and I had been married March 1, and I thought we'd starve to death for sure, but I landed a job at a filling station in Jefferson City. We rented an apartment at the corner of Jefferson and McCarty streets near the station. I made \$20 a week pumping gas and greasing cars, plus \$5 a game playing baseball in Jefferson City and Columbia and \$8 for playing in Moberly. I played shortstop and pitched for various teams. That was good money for the times. I became independently rich!

Those were Prohibition days and there were a lot of people making home-brew. There was a guy who ran a little restaurant near St. Peter's Catholic Church on Broadway Street a couple of blocks from the station where I worked. He sold hamburgers up front, but made illegal beer in the back room. One morning, I was opening the station when I saw his Model A Ford coming up the hill on Jefferson. Just as he passed, a case full of bottles slid out of the rumble seat and hit the pavement. The old boy knew he'd lost part of his load, but he didn't dare stop. I ran out and picked up those quart bottles of beer rolling all over the street. None of them were broken. I refilled the case and hid it in the grease pit inside the gas station. That evening after work I stopped by the guy's restaurant.

"This morning down by McCarty and Jefferson, did you lose something?" I asked.

"What'd you do with it?" he said.

"Picked it up. Nobody knows about it but me."

"I'll tell you what," he said. "You drink the beer, but save my bottles and case and let me have them back." I couldn't argue with that. Every now and then I'd stop by his place after work and he'd always give me a quart of good cold beer to drink.

I played baseball regularly from the late '20s to the late '40s. I had a strong throwing arm and was a good hitter, though I wasn't major league caliber. I could have played minor league ball, though, and still have several telegrams from the Springfield and St. Joseph teams in the Class C Western League offering a spot on their rosters. But the contract only called for \$90 a month with no expenses, and I



*Capt. Clarence E. Potts*

earned more pumping gas and playing semi-pro ball around Jefferson City.

In the '30s a sportswriter for the *St. Louis Globe-Democrat* named Paul Peerman arranged a tryout for me with the St. Louis Cardinals. I warmed up with Mike Gonzalez, an old-time catcher then a coach with the team, before pitching batting practice. The harder I threw, the harder they hit. Ernie Orsatti, the regular centerfielder, was working out at third. They bounced three or four screamers off his ankles and he headed for the dugout. "Man, I'm gettin' me some shin guards," he said. My hardest pitches were just good batting practice to those guys.

Major league teams used to go on barnstorming tours when the regular season ended, visiting towns and playing exhibition games and sometimes picking up local talent to play with them. In the mid-'30s I played with Dizzy and Paul Dean and several other St. Louis Cardinals against the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro American League. This was several years before organized baseball broke the color line. Satchel Paige pitched against us, and could he throw! The ball looked like an aspirin tablet coming up there. You know what Dizzy Dean said when somebody asked if he was the hardest throwing pitcher in baseball: "Well, I'm amongst

'em!" But he knew Satch was faster. Diz sat there on the bench that day watching Satch strike out one batter after another and just shook his head. "Did you ever see anything like that?" he said.

I got my bat on one pitch that day. I swung about the time Paige cut loose and sliced one down the right field foul line for a triple. I was a right-handed hitter, who normally pulled everything to the left, but I couldn't get around on old Satch and neither could anybody else. I think we lost about four to two.

During the 1940s I was a city policeman here in Fulton. Hugh P. Williamson was county prosecutor then, and brother, he was a case. He canvassed Callaway County twice on foot to win the election! We'd arrest some guy that we thought might be difficult to prosecute in city court, and we'd call Hugh P. and ask him if he'd file the charge in magistrate court.

"Sure. Bring him over. We'll wrestle him around," he'd say. He always spoke in a commanding voice, with just a hint of sarcasm. Reminded you a little of W.C. Fields. Usually Williamson would prosecute the

case and the fellow would get what he deserved, but once in a while we'd hit a snag. We'd take the suspect to Hugh P.'s office and Hugh would look him up and down and ask, "What church do you belong to?" The guy would tell him. "Who's your daddy?" The guy would tell him that, too. "Why, I knew him," Hugh would say. "He was a fine fellow. I used to go fox hunting with him. Case dismissed!"

I was working alone one night at the police station in city hall when a man named Booker Mitchum drove up in a taxi. "Herb, I just now shot Bunny Tebbs," he said.

"What did you shoot Bunny for?" I said.

"We got into an argument over a 20-cent ice bill," said Booker.

Good God, I thought, what a thing to shoot a man over! (There was a shooting or knifing about every night in the west end of Fulton in those days.)

"Did you hurt him much?" I asked Booker.

*Pictured is:  
Weight Inspector Herb Lee at  
the Kingdom  
City weigh station in 1954.*





"Well, he fell down."

"Where did it happen, Booker?"

"Up by Foots Youngs'," he said. This was a popular hangout where they served liquor and food.

"How far away were you when you shot him?" I asked.

"Across the street."

"Have you got the gun with you?"

"Yeah." He reached into the taxi and brought out a sawed-off 12-gauge shotgun. I put the gun into the evidence locker. "Get in the police car. We'll go see how bad Bunny's hurt," I said.

"Herb, I can't go to that end of town. They'll kill me. Would you take me to the corner of Westminster Avenue and Seventh Street?" (The site of the Churchill Memorial today.) "I'll slip on home and see my wife and then I'll come right back down here."

It was against my better judgment, but I took him where he wanted to go. After all, Bunny probably only had a few buckshot in him and was more mad than hurt.

"Okay, Booker," I said as I let him out of the car, "you go ahead on home, but make sure you meet me at city hall after you talk to your wife."

A big crowd had gathered in front of Footh Youngs's place. "Where's Bunny?" I asked.

"They took him to the hospital," somebody said.

I tore over to Callaway Memorial emergency room and found Bunny lying there, conscious, but breathing unsteadily. I bent

down close and spoke to him. "How are you doing, Bunny?"

"Oh, Herb, I'm going down ... I'm goin' down fast."

"No, you're not," I said. Then I noticed the wounds on his body. He was shirtless and his chest and abdomen were peppered with buckshot, but he wasn't bleeding externally; it was all flowing out inside. Booker had blasted him dead center with over 180 buckshot. "Herb," he groaned, "I hurt so bad. Turn me over, please."

"I can't turn you over, Bunny. You've got this tube in your arm."

"Turn me over anyway. I'm goin' down."

Only a minute or so later, Bunny died. As I left the hospital, it hit me: A murder had been committed and I had locked up the shotgun and turned the murderer loose! I drove over to city hall in a hurry and found Booker sitting there, patiently waiting. He'd kept his word and sure soothed my nerves in the process.

That 12-gauge was a good single-barreled weapon, and of course I had to keep it to produce as evidence at the trial. I told Hugh P. I'd like to have the gun after the trial, but I never saw that shotgun after they'd sentenced Booker for Bunny's murder. That doggoned Hugh P. kept it.

During the trial Williamson questioned me on the witness stand about the murder weapon. "How long is the barrel of this shotgun, Officer Lee?" asked Hugh P., brandishing it in front of the jury.

"I don't know exactly," I said "Probably about 28 or 29 inches, but it has been sawed off." Hell, if he wanted to know, he should have measured it.

"Well, how long was it before it was sawed off?" said Williamson.

"How should I know?" I said. "I never laid eyes on it before the night of the shooting."

I never did figure out what Hugh P. was driving at with that line of questioning, but I'm satisfied that rascal wound up with the shotgun after the trial was over.

I chauffeured Hugh around in the police car occasionally. One night he called the station. "Herb, come and get me. I'm attending an evening speech in the courthouse yard. Clarence Cannon's going to speak." Cannon was the U.S. representative to Congress for the Ninth District. We arrived at the courthouse and Hugh grabbed me by the arm and led me onto the speaker's platform. A huge crowd had gathered. He marched right up to Clarence Cannon.

"Clarence!" boomed Hugh P., "I want you to meet Herb Lee, the best damned policeman in the state of Missouri!" You talk about embarrassing; I wanted to crawl under the platform.

Hugh liked to drink beer, usually someone else's—a bank official or some other prominent person he knew. Along about midnight, he'd call. "Come get me, Herb." I'd drive him home and he'd be afraid to go in. His wife was a little bitty woman, but he was scared to death of her. And then there was his mother-in-law, who lived with them. He was more afraid of her.

One time I was sitting there waiting for him to gather enough courage to go in, and I said, "Hugh, the first thing I'd do when I walked in that house and that mother-in-law jumped me would be to knock her under the table."

Hugh P. shuddered. "You don't know my mother-in-law."

Williamson's wife always insisted that she drive their car; his mother-in-law rode

beside her with Hugh occupying the back seat. One day they drove to Jefferson City to shop. They parallel-parked with plenty of room but when they returned, they found that cars had crowded them front and rear. They all climbed in, Hugh in the back as usual, and Mrs. Williamson attempted to drive out of the parking space. She rammed bumpers and fought the wheel for several minutes and didn't get anywhere. Finally she turned to her husband. "Hugh, you're just going to have to get it out of here for me."

Unperturbed, Williamson replied, "Woman, you put it in, now you get it out."

Hugh P. was a fine fellow, though, and I liked him. He did a lot of charity and used to give away huge quantities of vegetables from his garden to needy persons, and few people knew about it. He never wanted publicity for charitable acts, but don't get the idea that he didn't like to see his name in print. He wrote numerous articles for magazines and was forever sounding off about some issue in letters to newspaper editors. They always printed what he wrote. It was stirring stuff.

He brought his young son, Hugh Jr., to the fire station one morning and asked the fire chief, "Can my boy drive one of your fire engines?" The chief said okay, and little Hugh climbed into the driver's seat, pretending he was responding to a four-alarm. Hugh P. rose to the occasion. "Drive her, son, drive her!" he bellowed, "William Woods College is burning to the ground!"

The city police, firemen, and members of the sheriff's department and other public officials had a party on Auxvasse Creek one day, complete with fried fish and case after case of beer. Everyone had plenty and Hugh P. ate and drank more than anybody else. How he held it all, I'll never know. He must have eaten 15 pounds of fish, and Lord only knows how much beer he put down. Late in the afternoon we ran

out of beer, so somebody jumped in a pickup, drove to Fulton, and brought back a 16-gallon keg. When he drove up, Williamson was first in line, carrying a gallon bucket! "God bless you, son," he told the guy in the pickup. "I've been a-sucking' on these little bottles all day. If it's anything I like, it's BEER IN A BARREL!" With that he proceeded to fill the bucket and load his plate with more fish. He wound up in a heck of a shape. There was a little rowboat there on the bank and Hugh P. climbed in and rowed up and down Auxvasse Creek to ease his misery.

Following his term as prosecutor, Williamson served as magistrate judge for several years. You could always count on something unusual happening in his courtroom. Trooper Dale Swartz used to tell about a time he took two speeders in before Williamson. The first man had been running 10 mph over the limit. Hugh P. found him guilty and imposed a \$15 fine. While the first guy was paying the clerk next to the judge's bench, the second case was presented. This guy had been driving 15 mph over the limit. Hugh P. heard the evidence and proceeded to fine him \$10, \$5 less than the first man even though the second one had been driving five mph faster! And, to top it all off, the first fellow was standing there within ear-shot. No objection was raised in the courtroom, but outside, the speeder who had paid \$15 squawked to Swartz, who could only apologize and try to smooth it over as best he could.

After the speeders had left, Dale went back to the courtroom and asked Hugh P. about the apparent inequality of justice. "What do I tell them when they ask me about it, judge?" he asked.

"Why, that's easy," said Hugh P. "Just tell them the judge is crazy."

I'll never forget one day when Martha and I were driving out Seventh Street. We

came up behind two kids that Martha knew and, since it was hot, we stopped and gave them a lift. When they got in I noticed one had a little hatchet and other a hammer and some cold chisels.

"Where you going?" I asked them.

"Out to Hugh P.'s house."

"What are you going to do out there?"

"We're going to defrost his icebox!"

Hugh passed away recently after a long illness, and his wife died a few weeks later. She taught at William Woods College for years, but had been in a rest home sometime before her death.

In December of 1950, I started working as a weight inspector for the Missouri State Highway Patrol. Cal Price, Russell "Poodle" Breid, and Sergeant Roy "Pappy" Dix were some of the officers stationed in the area then. Dix was the zone sergeant and my supervisor.

"Herb" he said, "you do anything you want to, but for goodness sake, let me know if you do anything that might cause trouble. That way, when my superiors come to me with a complaint, I'll be able to answer them." It didn't take long to find out if he was as good as his word.

I had just arrived for work one evening on the four p.m. to midnight shift when the phone rang. It was Peggy, who ran the Chicken Shack, a restaurant down the road. "Herb, come on over. We've got a big feast going!" she said.

I should have called the office and told them I was going to be out for a while, but I didn't. I really should have stayed and weighed trucks, but I didn't even think. I just closed those scales down as fast as I could and joined the party. As I walked through the door to the Chicken Shack, somebody handed me a tumbler full of

whiskey and I drained it. Then, I sat down at a table and started eating. They had buffalo steaks, drinks, music, and a few girls, and I completely forgot about time, trucks, scales, the Russians, and the Highway Patrol. One thing led to another and I never did go back to the weigh station all evening. My brother, Nookie, was supposed to relieve me a midnight, and he had to come after me at Peggy's, where the party was still in full swing. "Herbert, what are you thinking about?" he said. "Come on out of here; I'll take you home." Of course I wasn't in any shape to drive or even walk too far unaided.

The next day I called Dix and confessed my sins. "I'll take care of it," Pappy said. "Don't worry about it, Herb." I never heard another word about the matter. No doubt about it, he saved my job.

One morning in the wee hours Cal Price and I were sitting in the scale house at Kingdom City when we noticed a car stalled in the middle of the Highway 54-40 intersection with its lights on. "I better check on that," said Cal, and he drove over there, leaving me in the scale house. Several minutes went by before Cal called

on the radio. "Herb, come over and give me a hand. I'm about worn out wrestling this guy." When I got there I found Cal struggling with the driver of the car, who refused to get out from behind the wheel. His wife was with him; both of them were dead drunk. I grabbed the guy and together we dragged him out, with the wife giving us the devil all the way.

The couple hired themselves a lawyer—a crook, who I won't name—and sued Cal and I. The case was moved to Jefferson City, to Jim Phillips' court, by the plaintiffs, thinking they'd get a better break in a different county. But it didn't work, because the court found in our favor after only a few minutes deliberation. The heck of it was the man and his wife were nice people when they were sober. I think they brought suit at the insistence of the lawyer, a shady character, known for his dishonesty all over the territory.

That attorney had it in for me after that. He hated me. When we'd meet on the sidewalk, he'd cross the street to avoid speaking. I went fishing at the government experimental lake east of Kingdom City one day and who do I run into but the law-



*Weight Inspector Herb Lee at work in Kingdom City on November 22, 1954.*



yer. Well, he couldn't cross the lake, so he just ignored me. "That beats any damned thing I ever did see," I said. "You've fouled up everything else in Callaway County, and now you're down here messing up my fishing hole." He took his fishing pole and went home.

Poodle Breid and I used to go fishing a lot together. He's retired now and still lives here in Fulton. We always took a little something to drink when we went out — to have when we finished our fishing. I recall one time, though, that we started a little early on the bottle. It was F.O.B. brand whiskey. Don't know what the initials stood for, just F.O.B. is all I ever knew. We were fishing at the Missouri University Lake between Guthrie and Ashland in a boat. The trees grew close to the shore and the branches hung down to within a few feet above the water. If you cast too high, you'd hook a branch, and I did. I could just reach my plug by standing in the very end of the boat and stretching on tiptoes. I always accused Poodle of pulling the oars, though he denies it to this day. Anyway I lost my balance and in I went. The water was cold and deep; it seemed like I went down for 20 minutes. I finally fought my way back to the surface and climbed in the boat, wringing wet, freezing, and mad. Poodle sat there grinning. "Too much F.O.B.," he said. "Flipped Out of Boat!"

Poodle was investigating a traffic accident one night down by Richland Creek on 54 and called me on the radio to summon a wrecker and an ambulance. Something had happened during the investigation to make him lose his temper, and he was barking into the mike and slurring his words so badly that I couldn't understand him. He growled and muttered a while and when at least he paused for breath, I cut in. "Breid, calm down." I said. "You're making so much noise, I'm having trouble copying you." That made him even madder, and he ranted some more, but he finally quieted down and



*Russell G. "Poodle" Breid.*

repeated his request and I called the emergency services he wanted.

An hour or so later I saw Poodle's car pulling up to the scale house. He got out and stormed in. "What's the matter that you couldn't copy me?" he demanded. "Can't you understand plain English?"

"Russell," I said, "you were swallerin' and spittin' and sputterin' and hollerin' so much, you just weren't coming in good enough for me to figure out what you wanted."

He glared at me and ground his teeth and shook his head and finally said, "Well, this is a fine state of affairs. I work on the Highway Patrol for 21 years and a damned weight inspector that's been here two years is telling me how to talk on the radio!" With that he stomped out and I didn't see him the rest of the evening. But a couple of days later, he'd forgotten about it and we went fishing.

Poodle was very particular about his clothes and car. Everything had to be neat and clean. He and I went hunting one day in his brand new, shiny black Packard and left it parked in a farmer's barn lot. We should have known better, because when we returned, I'll bet there were 25 turkeys perched all over that Packard. They'd

scratched it up and dirtied it from top to bottom. Poodle nearly died. Then he blew up and threatened to sue the farmer. It was all I could do to talk him out of it and get him to go home.

Poodle worked a wreck one night west of Kingdom City on Highway 40, in which a serviceman from Kansas turned his car over. Breid thought the boy was dead at first, but he came to in Callaway Memorial Hospital and wasn't even seriously hurt. He told Breid he had been headed home to Alabama for Christmas when he wrecked his car. He said his folks had called and told him they were low on money and that there would be no presents, but to come on home and at least the family could be together.

"But I've got money," the boy continued. "Where's my service jacket? It's in there."

The boy hadn't been wearing the jacket when he was brought in, so Poodle called me at the scale house. "Herb, go over to Tenney's lot to the wrecked car and see if you can find that serviceman's jacket. He says there's a wad of money in the inside pocket."

I walked up to the lot and asked about the jacket. One of Tenney's men remembered seeing it in the ditch at the accident scene. "I think they threw it in the back of the wrecker," he said, but it wasn't there. Another guy said it had fallen out when they unhooked the car at the lot. "I saw the jacket lying out on the drive, so I picked it up and threw it in the back seat of the car," he said.

It was still there in the seat; so muddy you couldn't read the insignia. I felt inside and, sure enough, I found a wallet so full of bills the boy had put a rubber band around it to keep it closed. Don Tenney and I counted over \$700 in greenbacks. I called the hospital and told Poodle we'd found the money. When the boy received the good news, he called his parents in Alabama.

"We're going to have Christmas just as soon as I can get out of this hospital and catch a bus home," he told them. A few days later he was discharged and headed south.

It was truly remarkable that we found that money. The jacket was so filthy, it's surprising that anyone picked it up at all, and as much as the jacket was thrown around, the billfold easily could have fallen out and been lost forever. But, happily, we found the boy's money. I like to think he and his family had a great Christmas that year.

One day in the early '50s, Breid and I were sitting in the scale house when a fellow drove up and reported a man lying in a ditch near Richland Creek on Highway 54. Officers Roy Dix and Slick Slevin went down there and found it was only a dummy dressed up in a Missouri University sweatshirt, trousers, shoes, and a hat. They brought him to the scale house, where we sat him on a little cabinet in the corner under the switchbox as a conversation piece. I'd be working nights and, every once in a while, I'd catch that booger in the corner of my eye and it would scare me, even though I knew he was just a dummy. He was that lifelike.

One evening a few weeks after that, Poodle Breid stopped a truck driver in front of the scale house for a minor traffic violation and brought him inside to write a warning ticket. The scale house had two rooms and we noticed the fellow staring through the doorway at the dummy while Poodle talked to him. The lights were out in the other room though, so he couldn't see the dummy distinctly.

"Poodle," I said, "I'm ready for coffee when you get through here."

"Me, too," said Poodle, "but that sonofabuck in the other room might get up and leave while we're gone."

"I'll take care of that," I said. I walked into the other room, pulled my billy club from under the counter, and whopped the dummy right on the head. He slumped down like he was unconscious. I put away the club and rejoined Breid and the driver. "Poodle," I said, "you won't have to worry about that fellow. He'll be here when we get back." The truck driver didn't say anything. He just walked to his truck, looking back every few steps.

The next day Captain Potts paid us a visit. "You get that dummy out of here!" he ordered. "A guy called the office this morning and said you beat some poor fellow half to death last night!"

We had a lot of funny things happen around the scale house. There used to be a store across the highway, run by Emmett Baumgartner. His son, George, has a large furniture store in Auxvasse now. Emmett caught a chicken hawk with a broken wing and nursed him back to health. He kept him chained to a perch inside his store. One Friday afternoon a Missouri University student, who was hitchhiking home, stopped in for a bottle of soda pop. The hawk caught his eye.

"Oh, my," the boy said, "What is he?"

"Son, that's a Missouri eagle," said Emmett in his most scholarly voice.

"Gee, would you sell him?"

"Oh, I don't know if I could. They're rare, you know."

This only whetted the student's desire to possess the bird. "I'll give you 10 dollars," he said.

"I'm lettin' him go mighty cheap," said Emmett, "but I can see you're a bird lover and that you'll give him good care. It's a deal."

The last we saw of the student, he was hitchhiking east on 40, suitcase in one hand, and hawk tied to the other wrist. That old bird was flapping his wings, threatening to lift the kid right off his feet, but he wasn't about to let his "eagle" get away.

My eyes started going bad in the 1950s, but before I bought prescription glasses, I used to go to the dime store and buy a pair with magnifying lenses for a quarter. I'd take a cigarette pack along and search for a pair strong enough to enable me to read the fine print on the pack. I only wore the glasses when I read chauffeurs' licenses of truckers who stopped at the scale house. One day I was in Emmett's store and noticed him making out a sales receipt to Boyd Gouldy. Emmett was squinting and holding the receipt close to his eyes to see the print. I pulled out my 25 cent glasses. "Here, Emmett try these," I said. Of course, those lenses magnified the writing so he could read it fine.

"Oh, boy," said Emmett, "these are keen. Where'd you get 'em?"

"Emmett, I've had those for years. They're special-made. Really fine glasses."

"What would you take for 'em?"

"Gosh, Emmett," I said, "I'd hate to part with those. I need them in my work ... but I guess I could let you have them for five dollars."

He gave me five and I gave him the glasses. Emmett's boy, George, and Boyd Gouldy, who was a huge fellow, were standing there, and I think they suspected something was up, but neither said a word.

Then Emmett turned around, still wearing the glasses, and bumped into Boyd. "That's pretty good," said George. "You gave five dollars for a pair of glasses and then run into the biggest man in Callaway County."

A circus caravan broke down one time at Kingdom City and the animal trailers were parked in the driveway to Emmett's store. Things were quiet at the scales, so I closed up and strolled over to look at the animals. One cage held a pair of lions. The male was a mean sonofabuck. I was standing there with a bunch of kids watching him when Emmett came out with a pan of water, which he slid through the slot in the cage. The male lion drank the water, then chomped down on the pan with his teeth and crushed it.

"Wow, did you see that?" said the kids. We were all impressed.

Emmett went back inside the store and came out with a set of keys. "Well, I've watered him" he said, putting a key into the lock. "Now I'm going to take him out and graze him." Those kids and I took off down the highway in a mad race—and I was leading at the quarter!

Back in the 1960s when Sterling Green was still a trooper and stationed at Montgomery City, he kept after me to come down and go fishing with him. I met him one morning and we went to this small lake he'd been saying was a good place. He'd brought his boat and electric motor and we started across the water. The fellow who owned the lake was sitting there on the bank watching us.

"Over on the other side is where I've been catching them," said Sterling. "This spot usually isn't too good."

While he maneuvered the boat I cast my plug and caught a bass, not a big one, but a keeper. "Here, Sterling, put him on the stringer," I said. While he was stringing the bass, I caught another one. "Uh, Sterling, would you mind stringing this one, too?" He strung the second one.

We continued across the lake but hadn't gone 50 feet until I hooked another fish. While I reeled it in, I hollered over at the owner of the lake. "Say, this fellow, Green, he don't fish much, does he?"

So I'm bringing in my catch and I glanced back at Green, and I can see I'm beginning to get his goat, but I can't resist rubbing it in a little further. "Say, Sterling, I've got a good one this time," I tell him.

I pulled my plug out of the water and, lo and behold, there were two fish on the line, both of them nice bass. I unhooked them and threw them in the bottom of the boat toward Green. "Could you put those on the stringer, too, Sterling?" I said.

He'd had enough. We hadn't even reached his favorite spot and I'd caught four fish. "No! I'm not touchin' 'em!" he roared. "Not 'til I get my bait in the water!"

I spent a lot of time with the officers, fishing and hunting when we were off duty, and riding with them when they patrolled the highways. I liked them all. The fellows still drop by the house occasionally to talk, and Kenny Miller, who's about to retire himself, always stops in when he works on holidays. But I don't miss working; permanent vacation is just fine.

Since I retired, Martha and I don't travel much outside the Fulton area—we never did — and we don't go to retirement parties. I didn't want one myself, so now I don't go to other people's. We visit friends and play pitch with my brothers and their wives and find plenty to occupy our time. Why, I'm running around so much now doing things I have to do, I don't know how I managed to get everything done while I was working."

*(This interview took place in 1980. Weight Inspector Herb H. Lee died March 3, 1985.)*





# 2005

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## INTERVIEWS

# HARRY W. DUNCAN

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*Mr. Harry W. Duncan was the Patrol's first radio operator—hired in 1937. He was also the first director of Communications, a position he held for over 25 years. Harry seemed unaware of his importance in Patrol history and questioned why he "was receiving this attention". Harry and the other early Patrol employees were responsible for making the Patrol what it is today. They built the foundation for what is now the nationally recognized agency known as the Missouri State Highway Patrol.*

Harry was born in Nevada, Missouri, the oldest son of Michael and Sally Duncan. His younger brother, Raymond, is deceased.

"We were poor people just like everyone else at that time. I was the first person in the family on either side to graduate from high school and the first to graduate from college. I graduated from Nevada High School. That building is no longer there; businesses are there now. When I went to high school there was only one student who had a car. He lived in the country and had to have it."

Harry attended Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, Missouri, where he earned a bachelor's of science degree in history in 1935. He would continue his education, by doing graduate work at the University of Missouri-Columbia during the summers in 1936 and 1937.

"My parents paid my rent at college. For \$5 per month I got a room and had kitchen privileges in the basement. I worked at a grocery store and earned \$2 a week for one day of work. That covered food expenses. If I took my girl to the show on a date, I could do it for 75 cents:



*Harry W. Duncan*

25 cents apiece for the show, and money for a Coke afterward.

I assumed I'd be a teacher, which I was for three years, in Milo, Missouri, south of Nevada. Then I joined the Patrol. When I was a kid in high school, I got very interested in things connected with radio, which was new at that time. I pursued it on my own and I passed a government exam to be an amateur radio operator. I was interested in it as a hobby.

In college, I met and became friends with a man who became a member of the Patrol. When, in 1937, the Patrol decided to create a radio division, he called me and told me to take the test. That interested me and I did so. I passed the exam and went to work for the Patrol. Jay Bryant, who became a sergeant, was the one who called me. He left the Patrol eventually to take a better job with GE. I don't think I had any preconceived notions of the Patrol. I was focused on my little area of expertise.

At this time, there were no troop buildings for A-F, as there are today. It's inter-

esting—the Patrol was so much smaller. I think there were about four girls who worked in the office. There wasn't but one captain working at GHQ. The captain was Bob Moore and he was stationed at GHQ. Tillie Sonnen ran the office. She would put out orders. One was, "These young radio men coming in here will not date anyone in the office." That wouldn't work very well, and the first thing you'd know, we'd be sneaking out with those girls and having fun!

The Patrol was in the Capitol at that time, and we didn't have an office much bigger than this apartment. I was the first operator and then it finally got built up to about 20 I think. They started training in the dome of the Capitol. Originally, the radio station WOS was up there. You took an elevator up three floors and then walked up some stairs.

We tried to be very professional. If someone pronounced a word wrong we told him. We had one boy say, "They have set up a 'bear cage' ...", instead of 'barriade'. We told him about it. The training was setting up fake radio equipment, making broadcasts, and critiquing them later. We had to know the county names, county seats, and the highway names. We made up the training as we went along.

When we started we had three radiomen at each troop. We had six stations at that time. If anyone took a day off, the other two had to work 12-hour shifts! In effect, you never had a day off. As money was appropriated, they hired more operators. I'd say that went on for three years. To the best of my knowledge, only two original radiomen are still living Garland Winn (Macon) and myself. I will be 92 on May 7, 2005.

We gave call letters and time every 30 minutes to let them know we were alive. Summaries were given twice a day, when you read all the criminal activity we had that day. You might have one where

someone raided a henhouse and stole a bunch of Rhode Island Red chickens. Cows in the road happened, too.

I was the first chief operator at GHQ/Troop F. As we grew, I became a system chief operator, supervising all the chief operators at other stations. We'd call the chief operators in two or three times per year for meetings trying to improve our operations.

Radio Headquarters was in old Troop F Headquarters, about a mile outside of town (McCarty Street). It seemed nice to us, since we didn't have anything before. It was a little crowded, actually. The radio transmitters took up a lot of room. The shop was at one end. The building was more communications than it was Troop F.

When we built the Patrol stations at different places in the state, I think the land was donated by the local city where it was built. I know this was true at Lee's Summit—I was there. I know Lee's Summit was the first one built. I don't remember the sequence of the other buildings built.

I remember Otto Viets, the first captain at Troop A. He had a German accent. The Troop A grounds had a hedge around them. Otto was proud of that hedge. One day I went to Troop A, and there was Otto, in full uniform, trimming that hedge himself.

In 1940s, storms were a big thing to the Patrol. We did a lot of broadcasting. Amateur radio operators would give us reports on the weather to broadcast.

I remember one conversation with Hugh Waggoner. He was a friend of the governor, and later the Patrol's superintendent. There was too much rain, and there was some worry Bagnell Dam might fail. So, they sent a contingent of officers there to do what they could to protect lives and property. I was on the radio talking to Hugh, and we were trying to get supplies for these men. We told him see about securing some donated candy bars. When he found out how many he was picking up





*Harry W. Duncan, the first radio operator hired by the Patrol, 1937.*

*Harry Duncan supervises communications employees.*



*This photo shows an early Troop B radio room.*

he said, "Hell, I'll eat that many before I get back." Had to be early in Hugh's career, he was at Lebanon. Guess it was no later than the mid '40s.

In the '40s, we couldn't hire radio operators. They had gone to war. We hired some ladies. There were strong feelings about that. Some thought ladies wouldn't be able to handle the stress in an emergency. The Patrol furnished a car to go pick them up and take them home.

K.K. Johnson got the first radio put in his car. We used to have trouble talking to Lebanon. The radio took up much of the trunk — it was three feet wide and a foot tall.

At that time, we didn't have many officers on the road late at night. Got a call down Highway 50. There was a riot and they wanted a trooper to come quickly. I took the call and told Roy Keller — he'd have to go. I went back to my radio. After 10-15 minutes I noticed he hadn't left. He was putting on his uniform. I said, 'Sergeant, they needed help immediately.' He said he'd take his time and, 'It'd be over before I get there.'

I became director of Radio as of 1947, and still had an office at Troop F. A building was built across the driveway to work on cars and install radios. We converted the old repair area attached to Troop F into offices. There was a little bit of controversy: Where did I belong? I'll admit there were some advantages being out at Troop F.

The prison riot of 1954 stands out. You train people to do their job, but when an emergency arrives it seems difficult for them not to revert to other things. For example, there were signals we used to make sure understandable communications would take place between two people. In an emergency, people would just start talking. We set up a small radio station at the prison during the riot and I was there. We had communications with

key people, but didn't have walkie-talkies. I remember the troopers stopped their cars, took their keys, and left their cars blocking traffic.

In those days I reported directly to the superintendent and was a member of staff who met every Monday morning. You get into the administrative part of the job — budgets. You convince people to buy things that would help the Patrol. My superintendents were always generous in including the funds we thought we needed. It was up to the Legislature whether we got the money.

I used to go with Hugh Waggoner to testify before the finance committees. He had a wonderful way. If he wanted a rather large appropriation, they wouldn't talk about the money much. Some legislator would ask, "How come you're using these Dodges?" They'd get to talking about the cars and such and would pass the request without much consideration.

I wonder how cell phones have changed Patrol communications. When I was there we had one telephone line and you could call anywhere in the state of Missouri. They'd call in on the radio and tell someone to call them. I believe you could call out, but couldn't call in ... not sure. Usually, communications like this would be something that needed to be discussed or maybe personal.

MULES (Missouri Law Enforcement System) came about in the late '60s. There was a federal grant for improvement of the police communications system in Missouri. Kansas City and St. Louis police departments and the Patrol were involved and divvying up this money. The guy from Kansas City came up with that name (MULES). I got in on those kinds of things not because I was important, but because the assistant superintendent or the superintendent, who didn't know much about communications and needed information about technical questions. It was a pretty smooth transition into MULES.



*Harry Duncan fills the role of a motorist being assisted by Tpr. Paul V. Volkmer in this media picture.*

Originally, we had teletypes in the Patrol headquarters. Then, the St. Louis City Police Department had a small computer set up. They were ahead of us—they arranged to switch our machines. When we got our computer system, we did away with teletypes.

Before MULES, if someone wanted a license, you typed it into the teletype. Someone at the Capitol looked it up and typed it back. If we could do that in 30 minutes, we thought that was good. Had a teletype at GHQ and in the motor vehicle department. Employees were there around the clock. Jim Wollenburg was instrumental in the motor vehicle department.

I was chairman of the committee in the late '60s that purchased computers for the Patrol, which used up a whole room. I went to New York where IBM put on a school for police executives. That means Colonel Waggoner should have gone, but

he didn't want to. He said, "You go." I had a little experience with computers. People didn't understand computers in those days. When we decided to make this move, it was thought an officer would be able to check a license at the scene. It wasn't long before it branched out into all kinds of things — and wasn't just for enforcement. Then, the FBI got into the business. We soon communicated with the FBI, St. Louis, and Kansas City. (St. Louis and Kansas City had their own systems.) Then, it branched into counties and cities.

People in our department and in the Patrol's computer section trained other agencies. It took three days of training or so. When people began to "come on-line" Joe Wykoff would go out there and train them.

Ernest Van Winkle and I started the Patrol annual golf tourney. Mike Hockaday was the superintendent at the time. He gave us the nod to go ahead and do it. It was at Meadow Lake Acres Country Club (Jefferson City). It was deemed a success, because they've done it every year since. It was passed on to Vincel Maxey, who continued the tradition. Then they moved it to the Lake of the Ozarks and went to different places.

I was working for the Patrol in Jefferson City when I met my wife, Margaret. Up on High Street there was a drug store called Crown Drug Store. You could get a cup of coffee, two strips of bacon, one egg, and toast for 18 cents. I went there frequently for breakfast. A young lady operating a Sally Ann "ladies ready to wear" store came in there, and we got to know one another. When our daughter arrived, she quit and sold the business in 1952. Our daughter, Kathryn Jo Duncan Ford, is a retired schoolteacher. She taught vocal music in Clinton, Missouri, and in Blue Springs, Missouri. We also have two grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.





*In the 1950s, chief operators were called together for a meeting. Pictured are: (front row, l to r) Frank Huber, Orville Alexander, C.M. Cox, Harry Duncan; (middle row) George Wallis, Norm Harrison, Garland Winn, Parker Kilby; (back row) Jack Scroggin, J.R. Bass, ? Lukenbill, and J.R. Bowers. (Harry's note: Lukenbill was a smart guy. We sent him places and he'd enroll in community college. He got an electrical engineering degree, quit us, and got a high-powered job in California.)*

My daughter married a boy who, at the time, we weren't too happy about. But, he was an Eagle Scout, as well as a music teacher, and I told my wife that was good. He turned out to be a fine fella. Margaret and I were married 64 years. We had arguments along the way, but we got over them. We never argued about money. We had enough and she wasn't a spendthrift. We didn't save a lot ... not much to save when you make \$150 a month." *(Margaret died in November 2004.)*

"I was always very happy with the Patrol. It treated me fairly. I didn't make much money, but it was a pleasant way to make a living. I spent 36 years with the Patrol, and was never reprimanded or called to explain any of my actions. I had a pleasant, satisfying career. I started at \$145 per month—more than the \$80 I was making teaching school. I think my highest salary was \$1,200. A law in the 1940s

made the director of communications a member of the Patrol. I retired at the rate of a captain."

*(This interview took place in April 2005. Harry died on March 11, 2006.)*



*Harry W. Duncan, 2005*



# THOMAS W. PASLEY

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*Retired Sergeant Tom West Pasley—now, there’s an icon. After a 48-year career in law enforcement Tom is respected and well known. As a member of the Patrol, he worked the road, taught recruits, was assigned to the pistol team, rode a motorcycle as part of the Safety Squadron, and represented the Patrol in Washington, D.C., twice. He also designed the Patrol’s door decal, which is still used on patrol cars today. Tom’s strong voice related one story after another as he shared photos, newspaper clippings, and his cartoons. At 90, he still exemplifies strength and authority, with a bit of ornery.*

Tom Pasley was born in Fulton, Missouri. His father died when he was young, so his mother, Alice Lorraine Pasley, raised him. He graduated from Fulton High School in 1934. Before joining the Patrol, Tom attended the Southeast State Teachers College in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, where he majored in commercial and industrial art.

“I want to take you way back, now. I believe you’ve heard this. [Sergeant] Ben Booth, badge 13, was killed. Two people robbed a bank in Mexico, cut across, and came down 63. Ben Booth and the Sheriff Roger Wilson were sitting at the intersection of 63 and 40. They had received information by telephone; no radios back then. Booth and Wilson started across the highway and were shot and killed. That was in 1933.

Three years later, in 1936, I skipped school in Cape Girardeau, and went to the City Hall in Fulton. They were tearing the side out of a barn by the courthouse. I heard a thump... thump ... thump. They were determining the length of rope to



*Tpr. Tom Pasley*

hang George McKeever [who had killed Booth]. They tested the rope by wetting it down and putting a sandbag on the end the same weight as the man that was going to hang. They’d drop the sandbag repeatedly. This will stretch the rope. If the rope is too long, the man strangles, if the rope is too short, it will take off the man’s head. I lived one block from the courthouse where this hanging took place.

I washed motorcycles for some of the guys (troopers) that had motorcycles in Fulton. I went up to Highway 54 and East Fifth Street and saw the first trooper to come to Fulton after graduation. I was in awe. Over time, I developed several troopers as friends. Poodle Breid was a friend, and I owe him a lot. He helped me get on the Patrol.”

Tom joined the Patrol in 1939, attending recruit training at Camp Kaiser at the Lake of the Ozarks.

“Camp Kaiser had one large building and no facilities of any kind. It was the end of November, so they issued us two



*Sgt. Tom Pasley and Tpr. Russell G. "Poodle" Breid ride their Patrol motorcycles in a parade.*

blankets. We had to go to another building to take care of needs. Captain Wallis was one of the teachers, Johnson, also. All of them took turns. Hockaday and Brigham were there. I was tickled to death with training; I learned something. But, I didn't enjoy our quarters. All four sides of our cabin were on hinges, which were lifted up during the summer to cool the building. We had a water bucket in case of fire. Many mornings, it was froze solid."

Tom still has the training manual he was issued in 1939 as a member of the 4th Recruit Class. Upon graduating, his first assignment was Troop C, Kirkwood.

"Our area went down to Festus and Crystal City and up to Quincy. I got in trouble there once.

J.W. Whan and I roomed together. He was a brilliant man. You know, every night he wrote a letter to his girlfriend. At that time, we had to drive our cars to headquarters in Kirkwood and get a patrol car for our 12-hour tour of duty. There was a train track on the way. He stopped at the track and I told him we better go. He said,

"No, that's all right." That was the second day I was there. At Troop C, there was a log downstairs and you had to sign in. When we got there, I heard footsteps coming down the steps. It was the sergeant.

He said, "Whan, Pasley, when I say eight o'clock, I mean eight o'clock, and not two minutes after." We didn't wait for a train ever again.

I was laying in my bed one night and I heard a, "Wham!" Whan discharged his revolver and he shot a hole in the bed. We kept that quiet.

On Christmas Eve, I got a call to Highway 30. It was close to midnight. I got down there and there was a young lady there who was dead. Back then, there wasn't a radio or phone. A neighbor stopped and told me who she was, and that she lived in a house nearby. I had to go tell the family. They were all around the Christmas tree waiting for her to arrive. That was the hardest thing I ever had to do.

To show you how things have changed, I want to tell you a story. A manhunt took place in Mokane off Highway 94. (Back when I started they didn't have radios in the cars. But, there were telephones in filling stations along the highway.) There was a big Army plane flying around during that manhunt. When they flew over, they couldn't identify the patrol cars. They told the troopers to put their handkerchief on the roof held in place with rocks.

About ten years later, I was on top of every car painting numbers on the car roof and signs on the doors. I asked Colonel Waggoner, "Do I have to wear my uniform?" He said no, so I got on my motorcycle with a quart of white paint and a brush. I went all over the state painting. I saved them a lot of money!

I have spent a lot of time at the State Fair. I liked it. I got to go the first year I was eligible, in 1940. We brought in the



*In the early '40s, Tom Pasley traveled the state painting numbers on every patrol car.*

Safety Squadron and worked traffic up there that year. We kept the carnies squared away.

I think the Safety Squadron was one of the best things the Patrol ever did. Not because I was part of it, but the way they did it. The "little general" Captain Bob Moore took care of the squadron. He was the brains behind it. We could only ride the white safety squadron motorcycles when we were together as a squadron. The little general knew a lot of people, and got us those motorcycles. AAA was always out there with us. There were 10 of us, the little general, and he had two sergeants; 13 total.

Each of us worked a two-mile stretch. We did a lot of good—stopping people for every little thing. If a taillight had a chip in it, we stopped them. They probably didn't know about it. We just talked to them, wrote them a warning, and sent them on their way. You pull into town with 13 white motorcycles, and people just stand and stare at you.

I got along with the little general all right. Do you know how we made our squadron hat stay on?" Tom pretended to spit into his hand, "We wiped that on that lip."

"When we rode our motorcycles, the grommet holding the badge on our *billed* hats would hit against our forehead. That could wear a hole in your forehead.

I was driving on Highway 66 late at night. A car kept following me and wouldn't pass me, a bluish green Plymouth. I pulled over on the side and he went by. Well, I pulled him over. The car was stolen and he was AWOL from the Marines. At that time in history, we hardly ever prosecuted for stolen vehicles. The Patrol got \$25 when AWOL soldiers were turned over to the Marine Corps. I took him to Marine Headquarters in St. Louis, and that lieutenant told me that Marine uniform would look on me. So, I joined. I looked for that lieutenant while I was over there."

On September 24, 1942, Tom left for the U.S. Marines. He returned March 15, 1946.

"Colonel Waggoner called me one day and told me to meet him at Lambert Airport. We flew in a DC3—that's just an old tin box. We went to President Truman's Highway Safety Conference. There was an officer from every state there. I'm proud of this. We were all standing around waiting for them to figure where we were



going to stand and have a picture taken. One person suggested I stand next to Truman, because I was a Missouri trooper. There was a colonel there from another state who wanted all the attention. He didn't like that idea. Then, someone suggested we draw numbers. They passed out numbers, and I was the last one to get a number. I got number one.

You know, Colonel Waggoner wanted everything just so. He wanted troopers clean and neat. And, remember, he was there with me. We were outside for the picture. The Marine band was there.

One of them motioned me over and said, "We took a count of the best dressed officers. Now, what do you wear during the week?"

I said, "Well, this is what I wear every day." They didn't believe me. The whole band voted. They each wrote on a piece of paper who they thought had the best uniform. They voted and I came out on top. Colonel Waggoner was tickled by that.

One day, Waggoner called in two of us. "Pasley, you go to Mexico," he said. He told the other trooper to go to Camdenton. We got outside the other guy was mumbling about the hick town of Camdenton. I

told him if he didn't want to go, I'd go. We got Colonel Waggoner's permission and switched. When you moved to Camdenton, you had to be on your toes all the time. The colonel and governor were both from Lebanon. They came home about every other week, traveled through Camdenton."

On September 1, 1946, Tom transferred to Troop F, Camdenton, MO.

"First day I came down to Camdenton, they said they'd found a headless woman. The next morning, I woke up and was told they'd found a headless woman. I said, "I know." They said they'd found another one. They found them under a bridge. Kate's sister knew the two of them. They were mother and daughter. The investigators went to the house. It had new paint and wallpaper. They solved it when one investigator knocked over a chair, and there was blood under it."

Tom's wife, Kate, remembered the case, adding, "My sister had a restaurant and I helped out in there. They had heard about the women, and asked me about it. I said, 'Yes, they did find a mother and daughter who were headless.'"



*This photo was taken in Washington, D.C., and included representatives from other state police agencies. Tpr. Tom Pasley is in the center, top row.*



A little boy in the restaurant piped up and asked, "How did they know they were women if they didn't have a head?"

Tom laughed and resumed speaking. "They had a drunk come to town and they arrested him. Sheriff says, 'Can't do anything with him, he gets drunk every time.' I told the sheriff to call me next time. We took him down to the basement where the morgue was and put him in a casket. We turned all the blue lights down low. We all sat around watching him until he came to. He never came to town drunk again.

There was a little town south of Camdenton named Macks Creek. That was in my territory. One day, I received a call from Mrs. Creach, who I later found out, was Ross Creach's mother. [Ross was killed in the line of duty in 1943.] Mrs. Creach ran a hotel (a big hotel for Macks Creek). They would sit out on the balcony and watch the cars go by. On Saturday nights, the men drinking at the tavern would relieve themselves between a couple of the buildings. They had a contest to see who could relieve themselves the highest on the building. People at the hotel tried to get something done about it, but couldn't. When Mrs. Creach called

me, I told her to call me when it was happening.

The next weekend, I got a call that it was going on. When I got there, I arrested a man named Gill. I took him in to the judge. Gill got a big kick out of this. The judge read the information to him and asked him how he pleaded. Gill pled guilty and seemed to be proud of it. The judge fined him \$1 and court costs, and said, "Next time, I'll double it."

The next week, the same thing happened, and I took him in. The judge fined him \$2 and court costs. The same continued on the weekends for awhile. One week, the fine was up to \$10 or 12 dollars. Gill was enjoying this. That week, I took him in to see Mrs. Ida Bobbett, a newly elected magistrate. She asked him, "How do you plead?" He laughed and said, "Guilty." She asked the prosecutor what the maximum fine was. Well, the prosecutor didn't know. So, he told her \$1,000 and costs. She looked over her glasses and said, "Mr. Gill, your fine is \$500 and costs. Next time, I'll double it."

Those people were happy they could sit on their balcony. They sent me a box of cigars. But, Patrol troopers couldn't accept favors. So, I took them back and told them I couldn't accept the cigars. Col. Hugh Waggoner heard about the case and called me. He asked if I'd made an arrest and if I'd been given a gift. I told him yes.



*Tpr. Tom Pasley speaks with a violator and his passenger.*

*Ret. Sgt. Tom Pasley taught several recruit classes. Here he is an instructor for the 1946 Recruit Class.*



He told me to go back to them and tell them Col. Waggoner said it was OK for me to have those cigars. The governor heard about it too. I think they got a kick out of that case.

That little town had a lot of problems when I got there. Later, those people tried to elect me mayor!

I got my mail in the Camdenton post office. Every once in a while, I noticed a little, dark-haired woman in there. My mother wrote me quite often. I thought my mail was being opened, but I found out later it wasn't."

Tom's wife, Kate, finished the story, "Your mother's letters were never opened." (Tom laughed at this and agreed with a twinkle in his eye, "I know that.") "I thought it was his wife. So, I asked him if Lorraine Pasley was his wife. He told me it was his mother.

I worked in the post office. I put a lot of junk mail in his box. It was quite a while before he asked me for a date. He asked me once if I was doing anything that night. I went home and told my mother I've got a date with the new trooper in town. She said maybe I'd get home early for once. I

was always about midnight getting home because my sister had a dance place. I loved to square dance and we square danced every night up there.

He came and got me in a little roadster. We started out and I asked where we were going. He said, 'We're goin' froggin'.' We went down to a place on the lake. He had a little boat. We got in and took off. By the time we came home, we had a sack full of frogs. As we were coming home, he drove that old wooden boat up on a stob in the middle of the lake, and we couldn't get off it. He said, 'Get in the front, get in the back.' We tried everything to get free. I got home at four o'clock in the morning. Needless to say, my mother was very upset. It was hard to explain we got hung up on a log."

Tom and Kate have been married 55 years.

"Ole Brigham took me to recruit training to help him. I was with him during a lot of recruit training. I went with him to train the 1946 Recruit Class. It was, "Tommy this, and Tommy that." He had a deep, gravelly voice. One Sunday, Brig said, "Tommy,



*Tom Pasley was known for his sense of humor and his artistic abilities. Shown here is one of many cartoons he drew.*

line them up and take them to church—khaki uniform and black necktie.”

I got out there, and out of all the recruits one of them had a pink necktie. Out of 40 some recruits, every one of them was perfect except that one. I asked him if he had a black necktie. He said, “I’ll wear what I want to wear.”

I turned around and went to Brig, and told him about it. He said, “Get his gear and take him home.” That’s the way they did it then.

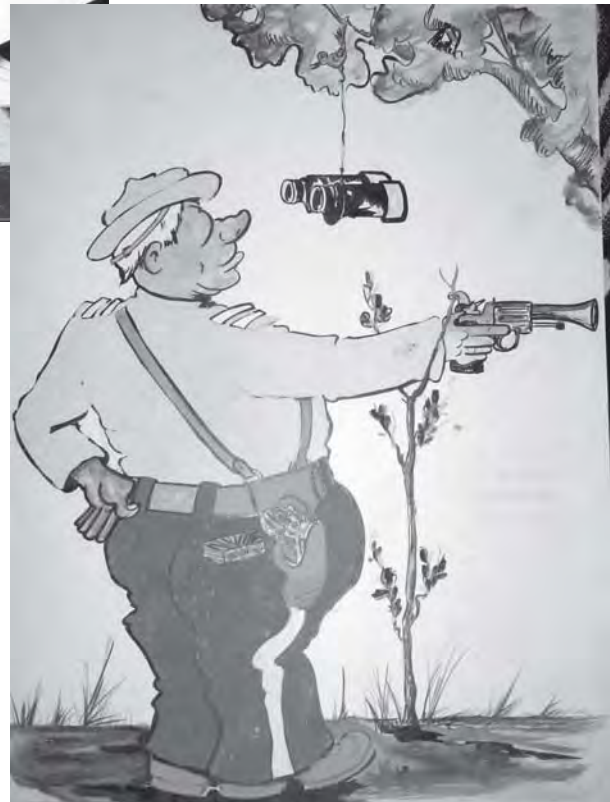
When they got to horsing around, Brigham would say, “Tommy, have them fall in.”

We sent them out into a gooseberry patch with a can, and told them not to come back until the can was full. We’d have gooseberry cobbler for weeks after that.”

On January 1, 1950, Tom was promoted to sergeant and assigned to Troop I, Rolla.

“My first duty was to carry girls into work. It was a new building and there was nothing but mud. We’d pick them up and carry them in. Didn’t know I was getting paid for that.

I went to Washington, D.C., to [President Dwight D.] Eisenhower’s inauguration parade. I was part of the Missouri



delegation. I rode my motorcycle. J.L. Murphy and C.M. Parker were part of the group.

In September 1954, I got a telephone call saying they were having a riot in Jefferson City, at the penitentiary. I was told to pick up the captain and head north. Captain Howard didn’t say much all the way there.

He told me, “Sergeant, keep it between the fence posts.”

Now, let me tell you what Jones had to say. [Bud] Jones was flying the airplane. The colonel called him and Jones said, “Colonel, it looks like Christmas.” He saw



all the red lights coming down the highways.

He was looking at the red lights of patrol cars on the highways coming into Jefferson City. We got there and went in and stopped the riot. Barton and Brigham were in front of me when we went into the dormitory. One of the convicts threw a barrel down, and one of them shot that guy. He tumbled down over the rails.

When the riot was over, we were marching a group to the dining room. They had to hold their hands behind their heads. One of the prisoners, his pants came down around his ankles. He reached down to pull them up and one of the other prisoners said, "Don't pull those pants up, they'll shoot you!"

I also spent some time in Boonville. We went up to the Boonville Reformatory and took it over.

I was a member of the pistol team. We traveled often to matches. The colonel sent me to Texas to school to learn to accurize the pistols — to take them apart and tighten everything. The pistol team was an assignment. Sometimes, the colonel traveled with us. We practiced a lot.

I retired from the Patrol on April 1, 1972. Then, I became sheriff of Phelps County in November 1972. The difference between being a trooper and being sheriff was I didn't have anyone to go to for advice. Sheriff who'd just left—I didn't want his advice. All the responsibility is on your hands. It was hard to get good deputies. The county had 12."

"Tom served 48 years as a law man," said Kate proudly.

Tom shared some cartoons he made while teaching recruits in 1946. The cartoons included O.L. Wallis, J.S. Poage, P.E. Corl, and H.H. Waggoner. Kate added that Tom made all the signs he put out during his sheriff's campaign. "They were beautiful, big signs."

On Monday, May 23, 2005, Tom turned 90.

"I told him we were going to have a birthday party for him," said Kate. "He said that's all right. His birthday was Monday the 23<sup>rd</sup> and we had it the 22<sup>nd</sup>. I asked him, 'What do you want to wear to the birthday party?' He asked what I meant, and I told him we were going up to the community center for his party. He thought it was going to be at home! It was wonderful. You wouldn't believe all the troopers who came."

Tom and Kate have two sons, Tommy and Jim. Tommy and his family live in Rolla; Jim and his family live in Winona, Missouri. They have five grandchildren.

*(This interview took place in July 2005.)*



*Ret. Sgt. Tom West Pasley and his wife, Kate, in their kitchen, 2005.*



# WALTER E. WILSON

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*Lt. Walter E. Wilson, retired, has the distinction of being the oldest living retiree of the Missouri State Highway Patrol. He joined the Patrol in 1942, at the age of 32. At 97, his memory is still sharp, as is his sense of humor. After all these years, his pride in the Patrol and his work still shows. Lt. Wilson shared his scrapbooks and his recollections ...*

I was born in Sedalia, Missouri, and had a brother, James, who was two years older. He is deceased. My parents were Hildred Elliott of Sedalia, and George of Kansas City. We lived in Sedalia. It was a railroad town. My dad worked all his life for the KATY railroad. When the depression hit, all the banks in Sedalia closed. There were two railroads and each had a shop of a thousand men. So, my dad was out of work.

During that time, I went to Smithcotton High School in Sedalia. I was the first class in that high school—a freshman—when it was built. The reason it's known as Smithcotton was because that was the name of the people who owned all that area. Their home was still sitting there—huge home. Their back door was right at the high school's front door. Of course, they finally tore it down.

I went out for sports; was football captain. My coach was from Maryville College. He said, "If you went up there and played football, I'll get you a job." Which he did—got me a job in a drugstore. I worked most of my young life in drug stores. I went two years and that's when the hard times struck, so I quit college and went to work full time. Then, I went to work at Medal Gold Ice Cream. I worked



*Sgt. Walter E. Wilson*

for them for a couple of years, and at Rainbow Bread Company for 12 years.

Another reason I went to Maryville was there were no jobs in Sedalia. Sedalia was in a state of panic almost. On the way to Maryville, there were a lot of gravel roads in those days.

During the time I worked for the bakery, I had a bad accident. The accident wasn't related to my work, just happened in that time frame. I busted my knee and leg and was in the hospital six weeks. I'd been in bed for four weeks with sandbags and that's where I met my wife [Orpha Yates]. She was my nurse. I thought, "Boy, I've finally met her." She had to work another year before she could get married. They wouldn't let her be a nurse and be married, or something like that.

In the meantime, I rented a house and we filled it with furniture and bought a new car. She was still working at the Missouri Methodist Hospital where she'd gotten her schooling. When she finished, we were all set up, and got married. She was an RN

for 35 years. When we lived in Chillicothe, she was the county nurse.

We had two children. Roger became a corporal with the Highway Patrol, and was stationed in Troop A. He has a degree in law enforcement from Maryville College. He lives in Carrollton, Missouri, having retired in 1994. Our daughter, Robin Wolff, graduated from KU with a degree in physical therapy. She has lived in New York City for 35 years. She has one son, in California, who builds satellites.

I became interested in the Highway Patrol and made application. Captain Ramsey over at Macon turned me down because I had dentures. Next year, I tried again and made it. They put me in the Bureau of Identification for seven months.

My desk sat at Ginn's back door. I was in fingerprints. There was a red phone right there beside me. I was at the desk much of the time. That darn thing finally rang, and I fell out of my chair. The Patrol was the first called if there was a major event in Missouri. I don't know who it was that was supposed to call us ... But, whenever something happened somewhere, a person in the area would call. We had a list of places to call after that — sheriffs and whatever. GHQ was a real good bunch of people. They were a pleasure to work with.

In GHQ at that time, I believe Capt. Hockaday was in charge. Sgt. K.K. Johnson was in charge of the fingerprint division. Tpr. Jenkins was in charge of fingerprints. Tpr. Liley was in charge of the lab. Berglund, I believe he was a trooper then, was in charge of safety. I stayed there seven months.

There were five of us in there. In December 1942, Col. Ginn called us in one at a time and I was the last. The other four failed to make it. So, when I went in, he extended his hand, and I thought, 'Boy that's a funny way to tell you, you didn't make it.' But, I made it [into the Academy].

I was the only one of the five that made it."

Walter tested for the Academy in Jefferson City, in the Selinger Centre of St. Peters Cathedral, which is next to the Capitol.

"I don't remember how many candidates were in there. But, they had a drunk come in and really "raise Cain". It was part of the test, but we didn't know it. After he left, we were told to describe him and what he did.

I went to recruit training on December 14, 1942. K.K. Johnson was in charge of the school at the Sedalia fairgrounds. It was for six weeks. I thought it was darned hard. I was the only one who typed my reports in a school of 24 recruits. During that year, cars became very scarce, so we were the only class who *had* to learn to ride motorcycles.

Tpr. Brigham was in charge of athletics. After school, I was sent to Lebanon (Troop F). Sgt. Waggoner was in charge of the zone. Marvin Taylor was the other trooper. There were only three of us. On Highway 66 is where I had my first assignment and where I made my first arrest.

I could say it like this. During the time I was on the road, I worked train wrecks, airplane crashes, bus crashes, and regular accidents ... fatalities and all. There was one accident where the lady's head was severed. They had two little children, and they were both killed. I have a picture of that—her with no head and hardly any body, and two little feet sticking out in the mess. That's a tough picture to look at.

Whatever there was ... I think I've worked everything ... five tornadoes ... five floods. One time, Sgt. Waggoner and I were assigned to Bagnell Dam by the governor. The water was at the top of the dam, and they thought it would go out at any time. We spent two days there, 24 hours a day, and kept the governor informed every 15 minutes through our Pa-

trol channels. He wanted to know exactly what was going on. It was rising pretty fast. The water got clear to the top. The dam held it—never did run over. I guess I worked probably eight murders; investigated them. Usually found the culprit.

Of course, in those days, we worked everything. Rapes ... burglaries ... bank robberies. We worked with FBI on bank robberies. Anything that was a federal offense, we called up the FBI, and they were good to call us.

I was in Lebanon about a year. They got short-handed in GHQ and they sent me back up there for a while. I worked in everything in the Identification Bureau. I got pretty tired of that. So, one day, I went to Capt. Hockaday, who was in charge at that time. I told him I had become a member of the Highway Patrol to work on the road, not in an office. I was getting pretty desperate ... to go to him and tell him that.

So, Capt. Hockaday told me I could go to either Maryville or Chillicothe. I chose Chillicothe. I'd gone to school in Maryville, and I thought, well, change would be good. We were working out of the Macon troop then. In 1946, they built Troop H Headquarters over here, and put Chillicothe in the Troop H area. At one time, Tpr. Farmer and I worked eight counties from the Iowa State Line to the Missouri River.

Trooper Farmer and I shot a guy and killed him. It was by Chillicothe. It was the scariest thing that ever happened to me. There was an inquest the next morning. I wondered what if they find us guilty? What will they do? Give us 10 years in the penitentiary? Since I hollered three times, "This is the law, stop!" it was decided he had been informed by the police officer sufficiently. I've had about all the experiences you can have.

When I went over to Troop H; Captain Duncan was the commanding officer. I made sergeant in 1954. I was a zone ser-

geant. We went more by time than we did territory. We had several zones around. Cameron was the closest, and there was no zone in Savannah. We didn't have a lot of men, so when I was on with another car, we had the whole St. Jo area. We overlapped Cameron and Maryville.

I didn't mention that I started as an auxiliary patrolman. We went to school and had uniforms. I helped out at a couple of football games. The Capt. Davis I retired under was the same one who taught me Patrol work when I was in the auxiliary patrol. I believe he was a trooper then, maybe a sergeant, out of Lee's Summit. Sergeants were few and far between then; lieutenants even less.

When I went on, we had boots, breeches, and caps. They were comfortable. Looked pretty good in them. Then we went to the regular uniform blouse. We wore a tie and the blouse in hot weather. We didn't have any air conditioning. I forget when they put that in. They were afraid to put it in; afraid troopers would stay in the car and use it and the radio. That was their excuse at first.

When I went on our only radio was WOS at the top of the Capitol in Jefferson City. "Watch Our State" is what it stood for. They would call us two or three times, but we had no way to answer them—no two-way radio. If we got it fine. If we didn't get it, we didn't get it. A lot of the time you'd miss them. We didn't know if they heard us or not. It was pretty much a one-way deal. They called us and that was it. They'd tell us there was an accident at a certain place. They would repeat it two or three times. We didn't have a way to call them back. That was the very beginning.

When I retired we didn't have radios—couldn't call sheriff or police. We could call just our troop. That was better than WOS!

My first car had the red light and siren combination on the left, front fender. They moved the one light to the top, and that

was the first red light on the top. It was about four inches around. It was the only light we had. Can't remember much about the sirens.

I always did think when we stopped somebody, we didn't have anything behind us. I always thought we should have something in our back window to warn people we were stopped. We pulled people over with no light ... taillights, of course. But, we were just another car. I never did submit that, however.

I was the first officer to escort the center striper for a period of a month. I stayed with him while he was painting, for his protection. We did a lot of that. Every summer someone in each troop was assigned. When I started I was out of Lebanon.

I made all of the riots. I was in Jefferson City at that penitentiary riot for three weeks.

I had just finished my evening meal when the signal came over my radio. "Proceed to Jefferson City at once, prison riot in progress!" I was stationed in St. Joseph, so this meant a 200-mile run to the central part of Missouri. All the time, I kept listening to my radio, I kept thinking, "This can't be true." In Jefferson City, the situation rapidly was becoming worse. Guards were being held hostage, inmates were being carried on stretchers, injured and dead. Then, fire! Four buildings hit simultaneously. Calls for more equipment were being heard by radio.

Trucks had pulled off all main highways to make clear sailing for the 245 highway patrol cars speeding to Jefferson City from all parts of Missouri. Local police and town marshals took up vantage points at dangerous intersections to help clear the way. At 10 p.m., I joined forces with about 100 other troopers who had already arrived.

I was assigned to the deputy warden's office temporarily. Then, about midnight, I was reassigned to Tower 8, on the east

side of the prison wall. A guard and I were to spend the remainder of the sleepless night 20 feet off the ground.

By now, I had learned what had happened early the evening before. On the third floor of the maximum-security section were 81 incorrigible prisoners. Two of the younger inmates faked illness. When two guards went to determine the trouble, they were overpowered, as were additional guards when prisoners released other inmates. For six hours, the place was bedlam, men running, shouting, howling, and fighting, robbing each other.

Apparently, the riot had been sparked by a handful of hardened criminals, then it had grown. As waves of rioters stormed the deputy warden's office, armed troopers on top of the one story Administration building were finally forced to open fire with submachine guns and riot guns to force the desperate prisoners to flee the prison yard. This gunfire into the mass of rioters seemed to break up the main attack.

Over 300 desperate rioters took a stand of last resistance in "B" and "C" cell houses. Shouts were heard defying troopers to, "Come and get us!" I was told to attend a meeting of all troopers at 7 a.m. the next morning for instructions to enter the building 45 minutes later.

Out of the 300 Highway Patrolmen, 245 members were present at the meeting. Eighteen men were chosen to lead the troopers into the resistive looking building. I was one of the 18. The remaining troopers, together with 100 St. Louis police officers, were stationed outside the building as a second line of defense.

We were heavily armed. The inmates were shouting, cursing, and throwing articles of bedding, furniture, and personal belongings. As we entered the door, we were greeted by flying debris. A 50-pound block of ice barely missed my head. Over



a loud speaker, the convicts were ordered to get into the nearest cell and be quiet — or be shot! One failed to obey, and he was shot.

There were about 25 cells. I was the sergeant in charge to go up there and bring all the men out. There were sometimes as many as eight or 10 men in a cell. They hung blankets, so we couldn't see them. They were hiding. First thing we did was get rid of those blankets. Then, we brought them out one at a time, searched them, and a trooper escorted them down where they were fingerprinted and sent back to their cells.

After the riot, they kept 12 of us over to do investigative work. I remained on duty for another 10 days. Four inmates had been killed, 29 injured, and one attempted suicide. Four guards had been injured and damage to the buildings amounted to nearly \$5 million. But, not a single convict had escaped the confines of the prison walls. Not one of the nearly 1,000 officers had been injured.

I was at Lincoln University riot for a week. It was all black, then. We went there to control it and settle it ... as security. I was a sergeant during that riot. When you're a sergeant or a lieutenant, you have most of the responsibility. We stayed pretty well together; worked as a unit.

I was at the Kansas City riot twice, for about three days each. [This was after Martin Luther King was assassinated.] During the Kansas City riot, I was a lieutenant. Sgt. Eader and I were assigned downtown. I have a picture in my scrapbook of a patrol car on one of the main streets in Kansas City ... nothing else, just the one car and two troopers. We put everyone else to bed.

In those riots we didn't take over. We worked in conjunction with the Kansas City police. Of course we took over at the penitentiary riot. Maryville College had a

riot and I was there. Warrensburg College had a riot, too. I believe that's all the riots we had in Missouri.

Of course, the penitentiary riot at Jefferson City was the biggest. I got permission from the colonel to write a story for *Reader's Digest*. I sent it in, and that's the last I heard of it. It didn't make it.

I was at the Boonville School for Boys for 35 days. That was when the Patrol took over. Colonel Waggoner assigned Tpr. Willie Barton—he was placed in charge.

The Patrol took over because of mismanagement. The kids were killing each other. Each cottage had a duke (an inmate), and that duke was the boss. He ran that area. The politicians didn't run it, the kids didn't run it, the 'duke' ran it. If you wanted someone choked or killed, or beat up, tell the duke and he'd see to it. It was completely out-of-hand.

Tragedy occurred at the Missouri Training School [For Boys] on Sunday, January 18, 1948, when Rolland Barton, a 15-year-old inmate was strangled to death by two older inmates. It was an ironic twist of fate that the death of a boy named Barton would result in the appearance at the facility of a trooper having the same last name. That murder was the final straw in a long series of crimes and violence at the school."

According to the written account by Walter, *The troopers arrived at the school at 6 p.m.; an hour after the governor's order went into effect. Eight other officers, who did not have to travel great distance, arrived yet that evening. The inmates, already in their quarters for the night were unaware of the officers' presence, but the takeover was well under way.*

*The 309 inmates of the Missouri Training School for Boys at Boonville were surprised to see state troopers on the grounds in the dining hall the next morning. Originally, 19 patrolmen were as-*

*signed to the duty. Later, 10 more were assigned. The troopers were instructed to remove their sidearm and received their assignments. Their duties included foot patrols, motor patrols, checking the status of inmate quarters and their civilian guard captains, administrative duties, and security of incorrigible inmates in the special detention area.*

"The Patrol fired all the employees down to the janitor. My assignment along with another trooper was in the dairy. I was placed in charge for the time I was there. They hired people who took our place.

While some were quick to criticize the Patrol for its involvement or its methods at the Training School, many more were impressed with the way the Patrol had conducted itself in such a difficult assignment.

My home was in Sedalia, so I made all the [Missouri] State Fairs for 15 years. I loved it. It was my hometown, and they gave me permission to stay with my mother. One year, I got to take my brand new car to the State Fair. Boy, was I a big shot that year. It was a 1949 Ford. It was so much different from the previous car. It drew a lot of attention.

I worked many football games – 12 years. An odd thing happened at one game. I was working "the Point", and after the game was over, when all the cars were gone, I looked for my ride and there wasn't any. The car that took me down there went off without me. I don't remember how that happened or what the excuse was, but the car that took me went off and left me. I sure felt silly. There was a great big parking lot, and here's one trooper standing out there looking for somebody.

You might say I was fortunate enough when I went on the Patrol in 1942, that a lot of the original members were still there. I got to work with several of them

and got to attend troop meetings with several of them.

Captain Pogue, an original man, followed Captain Duncan [Troop H]. After several captains—I can't name them all—Capt. Earl Davis promoted me to lieutenant in 1963. I stayed there and retired in 1969.

After retirement, I took a job with the Missouri State Parks for two long summers, from April to October each year. I was a park ranger—the law enforcement in the park. I had eight state parks in northwest Missouri to look after. I tried to make two parks a day. If anything special was going on, I made sure to be there. I used my Patrol learning and tactics in my park job—worked out very well. I was under the headquarters in Brookfield. I had a radio in my car, but I could never get anyone. I wrote reports like I did when I was on the Patrol, but I never got an answer. That part of it was a little discouraging, but I enjoyed being a ranger very much. There were always lots of campers in the parks; they were usually full. I expect Wallace Park, south of Cameron is my favorite.

When my wife retired, I retired, and we started traveling. We bought a fifth-wheel trailer. Did a lot of traveling with the trailer. We spent seven winters in Texas, one in Florida, one in Arizona, and one in California. Then, we went out of the trailer business and bought a little camper and used it locally. Every year, we saved up \$150, so that summer we could take the kids on vacation. We traveled to all those states. This was after I retired. After we had that little camper, we spent quite a bit of time with our grandkids. We have five grandkids and seven great-grandkids. After traveling all of the U.S., we made it to several foreign countries. We went to Europe six times, and to the Bahamas, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, Mexico, four of the Hawaiian Islands, the Yukon Terri-

tory, Canada, and Alaska. We were able to do all this while my wife was well.

Ten years ago my wife became ill, and went into a nursing home for 17 months, where she passed away in 1995. Her last year, I moved here to Country Squire, because she was ill.

I always took a lot of pride in the Patrol. I loved my work. I hated to retire. People asked me after I retired if I'd go back. For years, I said sure, right now. I loved every aspect. I worked with some awful nice, good men. In my time, if a farmer was working in the field, we might stop and visit with him. We were the ones who sold the patrol. Of course, they probably don't have time for that now.

*(This interview took place in October 2005.)*



*Retired Lt. Walter E. Wilson, 2005.*

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# JAMES D. “Doc” HARRIS

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*Doc Harris is a name that makes everyone smile. He became a weight inspector at the Patrol on May 1, 1948. After faithfully serving the organization and the people of Missouri for over 34 years, he retired on September 1, 1982.*

James D. “Doc” Harris was born on September 29, 1920, in Fulton. His parents were Howard and Leah Mae (James). His two brothers, Howard and Max, are now deceased. Doc’s nickname came from his family. His father was known as “old man Doc”, his older brother was called “big Doc” and he became “little Doc”.

Doc grew up in Fulton, where he played football. His dad worked in a coal mine and later in a shoe factory. He joined the U.S. Air Force, serving from June 1942 to December 1945. Doc was stationed at Selman Field in Monroe, Louisiana. He stayed in the U.S. during World War II, working as a mechanic and engineer.

Doc and his wife, Helen, met when he was working at the F-1 scale house and she was working at Kate’s Café. “The Lee brothers and I would shoot rabbits and take them to Kate. She’d cook them.” Helen and Doc were married December 10, 1949. Their daughter, Lori Jain, and her family live in Jefferson City.

After the service, Doc helped put tar on roofs part time, and also worked with sheet metal and furnaces.

Doc was good friends with Robert E. “Nookie” Lee, who worked out there at weight station in Kingdom City. “I knew him all my life. He recruited me. I worked out there at the scale house until they brought me to Jefferson City.” Doc got



*Weight Inspector James D.  
“Doc” Harris*

three days off each month and worked 10-hour shifts. Because the Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division hadn’t been created yet, Doc’s supervisor was the area zone sergeant. He worked for Sergeant Jim Judkins and later, Sergeant Roy “Pappy” Dix. Doc worked alongside Herb and Nookie Lee, also.

“Working with Nookie Lee is a great story. He was left-handed and a good ball player. He taught me everything he knew about being a weight inspector. Of course, I read everything about the job ... about what to do.

I met many interesting truckers. We had truck drivers from all over the country. Some of them were glad we had the scalehouse, but most of them weren’t. Many of them were put out-of-service because they were overweight. Some were over on size.”



Doc said he didn't think trucks transporting illegal drugs were as common as they are now.

"Me and Herb and Nookie were assigned to Kingdom City. Poodle Breid was in the zone. The weigh station was a 24-hour operation. When I went to work out there, it was very busy clear through the night. An eight-hour shift was spent sitting at the scale."

During Doc's tenure at F-1, records show that it was the busiest scale house in the state. "It was one truck after another. I'd be saying, 'Next ... next ... next ...' telling them to move up."

According to his wife, Doc would say, "Next," in his sleep sometimes.

Many unusual incidents occurred during the time Doc worked at F-1. On at least four occasions, trucks crashed into the scalehouse when their air brakes leaked down while they were parked at a rest stop unattended on a nearby hill. Doc also recalled one truck missed the weigh station, but struck a car owned by Nookie. Another truck went headlong into the pit where the platform scales set. (The scale mechanism had been removed for repairs.)

Doc said the most unusual truck case was one that was over length, over width, and overweight, — a tractor and flatbed trailer hauling two barges from the Missouri River in St. Louis, to Kansas City. It had no permits of any kind. They weighed about 112,000 pounds, were wider than the entire roadway, and were on U.S. Highway 40, a two-lane road.

Once, when Doc was at the scalehouse looking out the window, he saw a car come around the corner. A lot of little tags came out of the car's window. Doc went out and picked them up. The tags he picked up were from George Tutt's Menswear—someone had stolen a lot of clothes. When he got back to the scalehouse, he heard over the radio about the theft. He called in and told them where the car was and what type of car it was.



*Weight Inspector Doc Harris stands at the Kingdom City scale house in 1954.*

On January 1, 1963, Doc was assigned to General Headquarters as a Weight Inspector III.

On November 1, 1973, Doc became a chief inspector. He visited the different scale houses regularly. He was also the first senior chief inspector, being promoted on August 13, 1976.

Doc retired on September 1, 1982.

Since then, he's been busy gardening and doing yard work. "I fished a little bit at first. We were so busy, we didn't know how we ever had time to work. I put corn out for the deer and sunflower seeds out for the birds. It's been so dry, they all come here to drink water. We have opossum, ground hogs, and squirrels. It's been a relaxing retirement. I didn't retire, I just changed jobs."

*(Doc's story is a compilation of a September 2005 interview and stories found in the Patrol News.)*

# PAUL V. VOLKMER

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*Retired Lt. Col. Paul V. Volkmer served as a member of the Patrol for 38 years. He said being lieutenant colonel and influencing the direction of the department was satisfying. But, being a zone sergeant was one of the best jobs on the Patrol. His soft, strong voice gave well thought out replies to every question. His son, Sgt. Eric K. Volkmer, Troop I, says his dad is a very intelligent man and never forgets a friend. "When I was growing up, he was gone working a lot, but was always there when you needed him. He may no longer be working for the Patrol, but he still serves the people of Missouri through his volunteer work with Capitol Region [Hospital] and Meals-on-Wheels."*

Paul Victor Volkmer is the son of Paul and Victoria Volkmer. He is the oldest of five children, and grew up in Jefferson City, Missouri. His father was with the Railway Express, and his mother was a homemaker.

"As a kid, we had coal stoves and had to build a fire in the morning when it was cold. The windows were open and fans going when it was hot. If it got too hot, we'd take a sheet outside and sleep where we could find a breeze in the back yard. First cooling we had was a big, central exhaust fan ... that was new back then."

P.V. graduated from St. Peters High School in 1946, which is only an elementary school today. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps on June 6, 1946, and was discharged at the rank of corporal on June 5, 1948.

"After boot camp at Paris Island, South Carolina, I was assigned to the Marine Air Corps in Cherry Point, North Carolina and received training on an R5C, twin-engine,



*Trooper Paul V. Volkmer*

transport aircraft. I was fortunate enough to be on a flight crew during the latter part of my enlistment. I got to travel quite a bit. I enjoyed my time in the service.

I met Betty Ann (Rapp) when I was kinda hanging around after I got out of the service. I went to college and hung around an area in Jefferson City called "Goose Bottom", a section of McCarty Street near the drug store. A few of us played cork ball and bottle cap ball in the alley. As few as three of us could get together for a game. Betty lived not too far from there. I noticed a pretty girl around and made it a point to get acquainted. We got married November 26, 1949, after recruit graduation and before I reported to Butler, Missouri."

After being honorably discharged, he attended Jefferson Junior College in Jefferson City, Missouri, for a year. He then joined the Patrol on October 14, 1949, as a member of the 11th Recruit Class. They trained at the State Fairgrounds in Sedalia.



*This “checkpoint” was set up to weigh commercial vehicles. P.V. Volkmer is on the left.*

“We had a couple of troopers I admired living in our neighborhood. The Patrol’s reputation was outstanding at the time, as it still is. It seemed like something that would be interesting, and something I’d like to do. There were five of us in that class living in Jefferson City at the time. Four of us were attending Jefferson City Junior College. Out of the five, four stayed to retire from the Patrol. There were 33 recruits in the class.

We trained and lived in the women’s building on the fairgrounds in Sedalia. We used the facilities there for six weeks of training. They told us they only had openings for 31, so somebody would go home. We all worked pretty hard for a while. We didn’t think they were going to send anyone home until one day they did. We got back to work then. It was a budgetary thing. Ended up they didn’t have enough positions to keep everyone. Our instructors included E.V. Nash, Herb Brigham, and Tom Pasley. A couple of attorneys came in to teach law. John Berglund, K.K. Johnson, and Walt Snyder, taught also. Different ones came in and taught a course, then were gone. Bill Barton was

zone sergeant at Sedalia at the time. He brought some car thieves in, and we observed how they [troopers] treated/handled them [criminals].

One day, they took us out to a wreck just east of Sedalia near Missouri Highway 50. A train struck a panel truck at a crossing. As I recall, eight or nine were killed. They were workers being transported to a job—sitting on benches in the bed of the truck, which crossed the tracks. It was a gruesome sight. That was quite an experience for a 21-year-old.

It [recruit training] was demanding and interesting. They treated us like boots even though many of us had been in the military. Several instructors were ex-military. It was kind of like a semi-boot camp all over again. They kept us busy.

I was assigned to Butler, Missouri. The zone included Bates, Henry, Cass and the southern part of Jackson counties. When I got there, they had only three officers for that entire area. I became the fourth. We earned four days a month leave and 10 days of vacation per year. George Phipps was my training officer. Working the road was so different then than it is now, I’m



sure. Back then, we worked longer hours, and were called out or went to court a lot on our own time. If anyone kept track of hours, I never did hear about it. We noted them on our daily report and that's the last we heard. In one week, I might work Sunday afternoon and night, be up Monday for court, work Tuesday night, get up and work Wednesday. Maybe have some other court on Thursday. On weekends, I worked a shift like 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. When I came on, that first winter we wore a blouse, boots, breeches, and billed caps. You needed boot hooks to put the boots on, and help or a boot jack getting them off.

I can remember the first fatal accident we were called to. It was south of Butler near the junction of Missouri Highway 52 and U.S. Highway 71. There was a tavern there. A young man driving along ran off the road by the tavern and hit a tree. He was badly injured. We had a hearse come out — didn't have any ambulances in the rural areas back then — and take him to the hospital. We went by the hospital to get information for our investigation report. While talking to the doctor, he told us

the man wouldn't make it. I hadn't seen anyone die before. It was a sobering experience; the driver was just a youngster.

Back then, we got calls out in the country a lot, for all kinds of things — family fights, burglaries, or stealing chickens (during the daytime that was a misdemeanor; night time it was a felony). Sometimes, we got calls at home. Butler was a small town, so someone would generally know where you were. They didn't call headquarters in Lee's Summit; they came by the house. It didn't take long before everybody in town knew who I was and where I lived. Fortunately, Sgt. Phipps had been in Butler a long time. Most folks called or went by his house. I got my turn being the senior man in town and the sergeant when I was made zone sergeant in Mexico, Missouri, years later.

There weren't a lot of snow plows. We had to stop and put on chains and snug them up. Then we'd go to the wreck. When we got back to the highway, we had to take off the chains. It's hard to put on a set of chains and keep your uniform looking good. The side roads were gravel and the shoulders were dirt at that time.



*Portable scales are used to check the weight of this tractor-trailer. P.V. Volkmer is on the right.*



Troop A had weigh stations in north Kansas City, and at Noland Road and Old Missouri Highway 40. They built one in Harrisonville on U.S. Highway 71 and transferred me there with Tpr. E.V. Nash, from Lee's Summit. The zone received one more officer in Tpr. Nash to help with the added work due to the weight station.

When I transferred to Harrisonville, which had 2,200 residents and was close to Kansas City.

In December 1950, the Marines notified me to report due to the Korean War. I went for a physical, and they found a fungus infection, so they sent me back home until it was cured. I told Captain Otto Viets, Troop A commander, and he apparently checked with somebody. I moved Betty home to Jefferson City. I went in to see Colonel David E. Harrison as instructed. Colonel Harrison said for me to work at Troop F until I found out what was going to happen. The Marine Corps didn't end up calling me, because they no longer needed any more air reserve people. I was discharged, then assigned to Troop F in 1951.

I worked out of Jefferson City where we had three troopers per shift to cover the territory. Our territory included Cole, Osage, sometimes all of Gasconade, southern Boone, and Callaway counties. I enjoyed Troop F, there was a lot of activity. You were always busy.

One night, I just finished working a wreck. I was on Hart Hill [Jefferson City] on Missouri Highway 54. It was a cold winter night with six or seven inches of snow. Traffic was tied up due to accidents. After I got things going, I went to get into my patrol car. As I was watching traffic merge, I saw a traffic crash just behind me. Two cars had hit; the driver of one got thrown out of his car and came sliding down the highway at me. I jumped out of the car quickly to get him off the road before he got run over, and to try to make

the scene safe. Someone called to me that my patrol car was moving. I looked up and I could see the red light going across the highway and over an embankment. In my hurry to get out of the car, I'd failed to set my brake. It was in neutral with the engine idling. The snow just didn't hold it on the hill, and it started rolling on its own. I just knew the captain was going to be on me. It didn't turn out too bad. The wrecker pulled me out while it was there for the accident. Only a parking lens was broken out where it hit a fence. I went to see the farmer about fixing the fence. He said not to worry about it, there wasn't any stock in there. We visited a little bit and he invited me to fish his three lakes when spring came. So, some good came from an embarrassing situation.

During the 1954 prison riot [Jefferson City] I was home with my family. The power was out due to a big storm. But, I finally got word. I was told to get to the penitentiary, get on the tower at the corner of Cherry and Capitol streets, and instructed, 'Don't let anyone come over the walls.' A lot of residents were outside the wall hootin' and hollerin'. Many had shotguns and rifles, and some appeared to be drinking. I thought it would turn into a massacre if any of the inmates succeeded in scaling the wall. The residents would yell up to me wanting to know what was going on. I never did see any situation where the inmates might get out.

The next day, I was assigned to B Hall. It was a mess. Inmates were yelling and throwing things. We were downstairs when we heard one shot fired. Immediately after that, all we heard was the clang, clang, clang of the cell doors shutting. Everything got quiet. Later, we went to F and G halls. Inmates had to show us how to work the cell blocks. I don't think the guards we had were familiar with that cell block. They might have been new or from a different part of the prison. Some of



*Lt. Colonel Paul V. Volkmer*

the inmates were glad to see us and cooperated in getting the system to work. It looked to me like a lot of the inmates were not involved in the riot.

In 1959, I was promoted and became a zone sergeant. I was sent to Mexico, Missouri. That's one of the best jobs on the Patrol. We were always involved in a certain amount of criminal work, peace disturbance, traffic, routine stuff someone had to do. Got called out often. The zone covered Montgomery, Audrain, and Callaway counties, and once in a while we'd get into Gasconade County. We had six people most of the time, but often there was always one short and breaking in a new trooper. Sometimes we had some long runs to make in order to answer a call. It would take an hour or so to get there. We got called on everything. The sheriff needed help; the city called. Or, we would call them. We got along with the other law enforcement agencies in the zone most of the time.

In October 1966, the colonel called me in. He told me I was going to Troop A as a

lieutenant. First, I was the enforcement lieutenant over the zone sergeants, CVE, and troopers. Later, I was special services lieutenant. At that time, we had two lieutenants in Troop A. I never had a job I didn't like while I was on the Patrol, although, some jobs were better than others. I found it all interesting.

In the late '60s, there were riots in Kansas City, [Missouri]. They were brought on by racial strife. I went up to Kansas City as a lieutenant in 1967. [Vincil] Maxey came in as captain about six months before. It was in that time frame the riots occurred. I hadn't been there long when that took place. I was down there for part of it, then Maxey came and I went back to the troop to coordinate supplies and getting troopers in and out. Saw some of the activity. The citizens treated us like kings — they sure were happy to see us [in Kansas City]. Troopers stayed in dorms at Avila College. The Patrol was involved for several days."

In 1969, P.V. was promoted to captain. "I stepped in when Maxey was promoted. I was familiar with the troop and people. I didn't have to move. That was nice. Being a commanding officer is the best, kinda like being top zone sergeant. You can sit down with people and make plans and see things come to fruition. It was very satisfying. For example, the interstates were under construction and we were patrolling all the interstates in Kansas City. We worked together on daily operations to get things done right. If you involved the troops, it worked well. Most challenging was the disciplinary problems, figuring out what to do, so you didn't overdo things. We received our share of complaints, so we had to sort them out and be careful to see what actually happened before deciding what, if anything, to do. Choosing the right discipline for an infraction was not the easiest decision to make.

We had a lot of unusual incidents, too. One day Lt. Tom Poindexter called. He was working a wreck involving a patrol car. This lieutenant's car was always clean and shiny. There were some goats that got out of the pasture when the fence was knocked down from a previous wreck. One of the goats must have seen its reflection or something in the patrol car and started butting it. It dinged the car up quite a bit.

The Republican National Convention came to Kansas City in 1976. We handled traffic and crowd control. Quite a few troopers came in for that. President Gerald Ford was there. We had a good size detachment from the Patrol to assist Kansas City police. At that time, we patrolled all the metro areas in Kansas City. Of course, it wasn't as big of an area as it is now.

In 1977, I was promoted to major and assigned to GHQ. At that time, we had three majors—special services, field services (CommD, DE, MVI, CVE, and ISD), and enforcement. I was first in special services then I went to field services. While in field services I was deeply involved with initiation of the MULES system. I enjoyed that, it was a busy time.

I was promoted to lieutenant colonel in 1980. That job seemed a little confining at first, but I finally got used to it. When the boss was out, it left me there. There were lots of things going on. I would have liked to have been more involved, hands on. I missed that. But, there was a lot of satisfaction in the job. You have a little bit of say in things that need to be done or changed, and are able to watch changes come to fruition. I hope it was all for the good.

The uniforms changed a lot over the years. The old, winter, Navy, "P" coats we first used were so heavy we didn't usually wear them. We had several different styles. Different superintendents would

have a different idea. Someone would persuade him to use a lightweight coat or change raincoats. I still have a closet half full of Patrol jackets and overcoats.

Going to the "Ike" jacket I thought was a step back. We were used to the blouse, and I just didn't think the "Ike" jacket measured up to the blouse at all. But, the straw hat was great, a lot cooler than the felt on a hot summer day. So, I didn't mind that too much. I notice a lot of departments don't even wear hats in the summer now, except with their dress uniform. The old long sleeved shirts were wool and very hot in the summer time. So, I didn't object to the short sleeve shirt. I thought it was great. Whatever happens, you eventually get used to the changes. I still have a blouse or two, and a billed hat. I gave my pants and boots to the guys on motorcycles. I kept my riding boots for a while. I finally traded my boots with a Jefferson City officer for pair of shoes. He was a motorcycle officer and really appreciated getting the boots.

One of the biggest changes in the way we worked was MULES and data processing. It was new and we had to work pretty hard to keep from getting swallowed up by it. It has ended up being a sophisticated communications and records keeping system.

Years ago, our radios would get us into troop headquarters most of the time. But, there were a lot of locations where you'd have to point your car toward troop headquarters or a repeater to get in. Occasionally, we would have to try to reach another troop and get the information relayed. Looking at my son's patrol car and the communications system and equipment, I can see how far things have come. When driving by a patrol car, if I don't see the trooper watching traffic, I know he's busy with his computer reports, communications, etc. Used to be, you caught hell if a

member of staff went by and you didn't see him.

There have been a lot of changes in the way things are done compared to when I came on — better training, better communications, and, the one thing we'd all have given a lot for in the summertime, air conditioned cars.

I remember a long car chase one night on a weekend. A Fort Leonard Wood soldier driving in Versailles was driving fast. I turned around and caught up with him south of Vienna. Chased him through Dixon and radioed Sgt. Dick Knight. I think he got him. I was about out of gas and had to shut down. Bud Jones was on in Jefferson City, and he brought me some gas around Vienna, so I wouldn't run out of gas. It was a long chase. I was driving a six cylinder Chevy. There wasn't anyone else to call for help. So, I had to call Bud or wake up a farmer and try to buy some gas from him.

I've chased cars for 15 miles in one of those old Chevy patrol cars. If they got slowed up by traffic and I caught up with them and got them stopped, they usually didn't know I was chasing them. Those guys with the big V-8s could easily outrun our Chevys, even when they didn't intend to. Kinda embarrassing. At that time, there was no speed limit, so you had to make a charge of careless and imprudent driving.

I've been asked why I didn't work after retirement. I worked 38 years. We'd talked about going places and winter was coming. I took advantage of retiring in September; I could have stayed another five months. I thought it was time to go. I was antsy, looking for other things to do. We still take cruises and go to Florida. We go see the kids ... do what we want to do. I have enjoyed retirement too much to go back to a regular job. But, I do enjoy volunteering.

We have four children (two boys and two girls), eight grandsons, and three

granddaughters. Robert is just back from Iraq after a year. He was part of a helicopter unit with the Missouri National Guard. Paula lives in Higginsville, Missouri. Eric is a sergeant on the Patrol in Rolla. Julie lives in Sycamore, Illinois."

*(This interview took place in June 2005.)*



# RALPH M. RIDER

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*When talking to Sergeant Ralph M. Rider, retired, one has to pay attention. Ralph knows how to tell a story and shared many, along with a few “Riderisms”. Throughout his career, retirement, and currently, he has been active in his community. Ralph feels strongly about a trooper needing to be part of his community. In 2001, he was named grand marshal of the Dogwood Festival, an annual Camdenton, Missouri, festival. “The greatest thing to happen to me locally was being the grand marshal. It really made me feel good, because this was in 2001. I’d retired from the Patrol in 1979.”*

Ralph M. Rider was born in Pettis County, eight miles west of Sedalia. His parents were Henry T. and Clara Charlotte [Stahlhut] Rider.

“I had two brothers. One older, that’s Donald Verne, and one younger, Cecil Howard.

It’s a great thing being a middle child. On the farm, we had chores. It’d be ‘you two big boys do this, or you two little boys do this.’ That is the way chores were divvied up—perfect.

I went to school in a one-room school. It was on an acre of land that my grandfather dedicated, so the school could be built. There was a shed on the school grounds. That’s where we put our horse. We rode a horse during my first few years in grade school. Then, we moved about a mile closer to the school. After that, we walked a mile and a quarter.”

Ralph attended Smith-Cotton High School in Sedalia, Missouri. “A neighbor, who took milk to town every day, was contracted to take us in his 1933 Dodge sedan. He had several children he took to



*Trooper Ralph M. Rider*

Sacred Heart School. There were three or four neighborhood children he took to high school.

I liked high school and made good grades. I was not a very great athlete—people didn’t drive very far to watch me play. My older brother played football on the varsity team. I played football some, but not on varsity. I liked track. I could run like a scared rabbit ... I ran high hurdles. I read ... I loved to read; I still do. But, probably the best thing that happened to me in high school was when I graduated in 1940.

After graduating high school, I went to Diesel Power United School in Kansas City, which I enjoyed. They taught diesel mechanics and engineering. Besides being a farm hand, one of my first jobs was as an ambulance driver and attendant for Daniels Brothers Funeral Home in Kansas City, Kansas. Then, I went to work for Wagner Funeral Home in Kansas City, Missouri, and rode a motorcycle and escorted funerals.



*Pictured is the 11th Recruit Class.*

I enlisted in the Army on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, in November 1942. (Mother Goose, do you think I'd wait for them to draft me? I was eager.) Because I enlisted [rather than being drafted], I didn't get the seven days to go home and settle my affairs. Three days later, on my 20<sup>th</sup> birthday, I was peeling potatoes. Welcome to the Army.

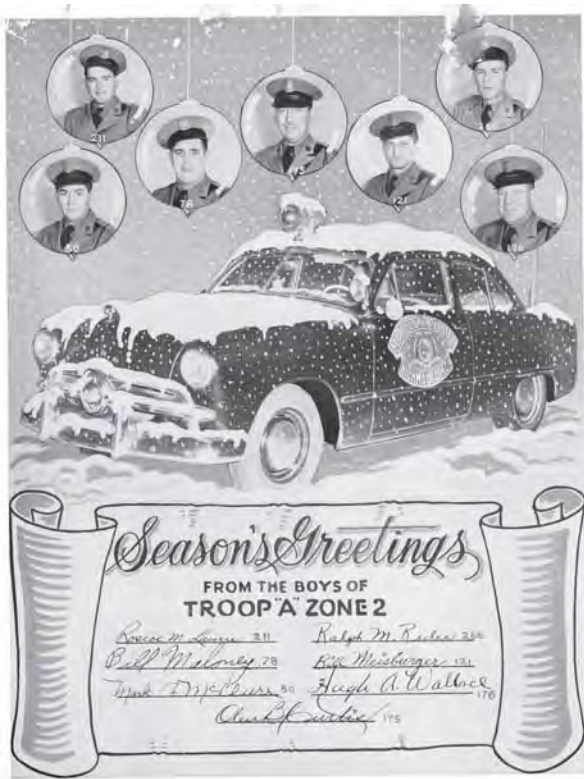
The Army recruiter told me because of my diesel mechanic and engineering training and ability I'd go straight to Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland, where diesel trucks and tanks were being tested. They put a group of us on a train. A long time later, some fella on the train said, "There's Limon, Colorado." We were going the opposite direction and ended up in Camp Carson, which is now Fort Carson, Colorado, where I served in the field artillery as a forward observer for a 155mm howitzer battery. Our battery fired the demonstration rounds for President Roosevelt when he celebrated Easter at the Garden of the Gods that year.

Then, there was a program—Army Specialized Training Program, because the powers-that-be in Washington, D.C., figured we have all these people drafted in

the service, what are we going to do for skilled people when the war is over? They decided they would need doctors and engineers. So, they started the Army Specialized Training Program. I applied for it. Because of my IQ and mechanical aptitude, I was chosen for engineering training. Of all the colleges and universities in the United States, they sent me to the University of Missouri-Columbia. After two semesters, with the upcoming Allied invasion in Europe, troops were needed there. The ASTP was scrapped.

I was assigned to Fort Leonard Wood to the infantry. There, I went to the state of Louisiana on maneuvers. I was there a month or so—seemed like forever. We were never in a building, and it was winter. Because of the dampness and cold, several of us suffered from pleurisy. After surviving that, we were sent to Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky. It was close to Henderson, Kentucky, across the river from Evansville, Indiana. It's no longer there.

From there I went to Fort Meade in New Jersey, and shipped out to Wales [England]. We really got the bad end of the deal on that. They put us in old bar-



*Troop A, Zone 2, sent this Christmas greeting one year.*

racks that the English wouldn't stay in. They had straw mattresses and the bugs that went with them. It was terrible. Then, one day, we shipped out of South Hampton, England, and landed in Rouen, France.

When we got to France we were told we would be there for about a week, and then we would be going to Holland for further training. On the way up, we went through Belgium. That's where The Battle of The Bulge occurred. We were massacred there. The Germans had pushed through to north and south highways. Some of them were in our uniforms, and driving our Jeeps and half-tracks. It was a horrible mess.

As I remember, we had one clip of ammunition per rifle—eight rounds—no other supplies, clothes, nothing. We had just the uniforms we were wearing and regular GI shoes, not boots, in the middle of December of the coldest winter ever in Belgium up to that time. We were sadly out of luck.



*This photo was taken Christmas 1950, and includes badges nine (O.L. Viets) through 266 (Tpr. Ralph Rider). Ralph pointed out several familiar faces in the photo. About Pete Stohr, the tallest man, he said, "On a manhunt, he'd carry a shotgun and it looked like the rest of us when we carried a pistol."*

I believe that before we got out of Belgium, I was one of four survivors in an infantry company (which originally numbered 212 men) who was not sent back behind the front lines due to wounds or death. Finally, we got some supplies. It was great. All of us had been wading in the snow in Belgium forever, and had foot problems (trench foot) ... terrible rotting feet, because we didn't have proper footwear. Then, we got shoe pacs (boots), which were leather tops and rubber bottoms. Of course, that accelerated the foot problems because our feet got hot and sweaty. They really did rot then.

After we helped solve The Battle of The Bulge campaign, we were sent to Colmar, France. There, we were attached to the French 1<sup>st</sup> Army, and after three weeks of fighting, we captured the city of Colmar. The only caveat in it was we couldn't use any artillery fire, we had to use small arms only, so as to not destroy the historic



city. For this campaign, I received the French Croix de Guerre with wreath, and a presidential citation.

Then, we went to Dusseldorf, Germany, where I saw my first jet plane. It made a half circle over the city. It made a different sound, not a motor sound. We peeked up from under our helmets and saw it wasn't ours. It was German. Later, we just kept going; crossed the Rhine at Rhineburg. Shortly after that the war ended.

Then, we were sent back to France, to Mourmelon-le-Grand. We waited. We were in occupation then. Several of us were sent to Chalon-sur-Marne, an old French Army camp now being used as an American nurses' redeployment camp. We were there to bring in food and supplies and drive pass trucks for the nurses. When nurses got three-day passes, I got a three-day pass, because I was one of the drivers who drove the truck. If they wanted to go to Paris, I drove them. Then, they sent us to the so-called cigarette camps, named Camel, Lucky Strike, etc. We stayed at these camps until we were sent home. Once you had accumulated enough points, based on time served, wounds, etc., you'd be sent home. Finally, they put us on a ship at Le Havre, France.

While I was in Le Havre, France, my older brother's ship came in. He was a radio officer with the Merchant Marines. He was the radio operator on board. I stayed on his ship one night. That was outstanding—food, accommodations, bunks with sheets, and so forth.

From Le Havre, we went to England. We shipped out of England to go home, and we were crowded in there like hogs in a truck. They had four tiers of bunks on top of each other. Many of us were seasick. I was (please choose a top bunk). It was stormy. Every now and then the captain would come on the radio and say, "Be home by Christmas."

Then, we hit a terrible storm and the captain said it was the worst he'd seen in that shipping lane in 30 years, so he headed north. On Christmas Day, we were in St. Johns, Newfoundland, and the ship waited there until turkeys could be brought on board for Christmas dinner. I'd have rather gone home. There is a right way and the Army way, and they're very different. Anyway, that's how we got to the United States a few days before New Year's Day. I took the train to Jefferson Barracks and was discharged there.

It was a great adventure. It started off so badly, because I didn't go to Aberdeen Proving Grounds. I went to the field artillery, which was a great outfit. Then, I went to the training program, which was learning and I liked that. Then I went to the infantry. Most people think that's as low as you can go. I found out the people you believed in were the ones you trusted your life with. Learned more about psychology there than any place. Learned to trust other people. You had to. The Army experience was high adventure.

For two or three years I worked for a chicken hatchery in Sedalia. I'd worked my way up in the hatchery and was head of the team that tested chickens. Then there was an ad in the paper, and I decided to apply for the Patrol. I was already making \$50 a week, and the Patrol was paying \$225 a month, nearly the same amount. I applied for the adventure—not the pay."

When asked how he met his wife, Lucia, Ralph replied, "That was such a lucky day. We went to the same church, and lived in the same area. We were married a year and 14 days after I went on the Patrol 57 years ago. Lucia has been the church organist at Camdenton United Methodist Church for over 40 years. She is an accomplished artist, as well.



Nancy was born in '52, and Ralph Jr. was born in '53. By way of George Washington University in Washington, D.C., our daughter, Nancy, became a lawyer. She is a deputy chief of the Asset Forfeiture and Money Laundering Section of the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, in Washington, D.C.. Ralph Jr. is an ATF agent. He's a group supervisor in the Kansas City area. He was in Chicago for 17 years. He is now in charge of the northeast corner of Kansas, including Wyandotte and Johnson County out to Russell, Kansas, about 20-25 counties. His wife, Sheila, was a U.S. Customs Agent when they met, and she continues in this work. Ralph has three children: Charlie, 12, Elizabeth 10, and Danny, 8. Nancy adopted a little girl from China. Her name is Joanna, and she is five."

Ralph was appointed to the Patrol on October 14, 1949.

"Recruit training was a walk in the park after World War II. It was at the state fairgrounds in Sedalia. We stayed there for five weeks and didn't get off at all. We just stayed there, except we could leave the premises on Sunday morning and that was it. It was handy for me, because I lived there. But, there were people from as far away as Tarkio and Cape Girardeau. Being off Sunday morning didn't help them very much.

One day, a nice looking young lady came into our classroom. She quietly whispered to our instructor. Together, they looked over the class. Accusingly, she said, "That's him! That's the one!" And, she pointed at me. Then, she left. We had to describe her and what colors she was wearing, her height, weight, hair color, and eyes. I didn't top the class in that exercise. But, later we learned that it was Trooper Wayne Allman's wife. He was stationed in Sedalia at that time.

I'll tell you, it was a good school. I made the *Patrol News* with my answer to

a test question about where something happened after looking at a drawing. My answer was, 'It happened in a southern state because the streets were wider.'"

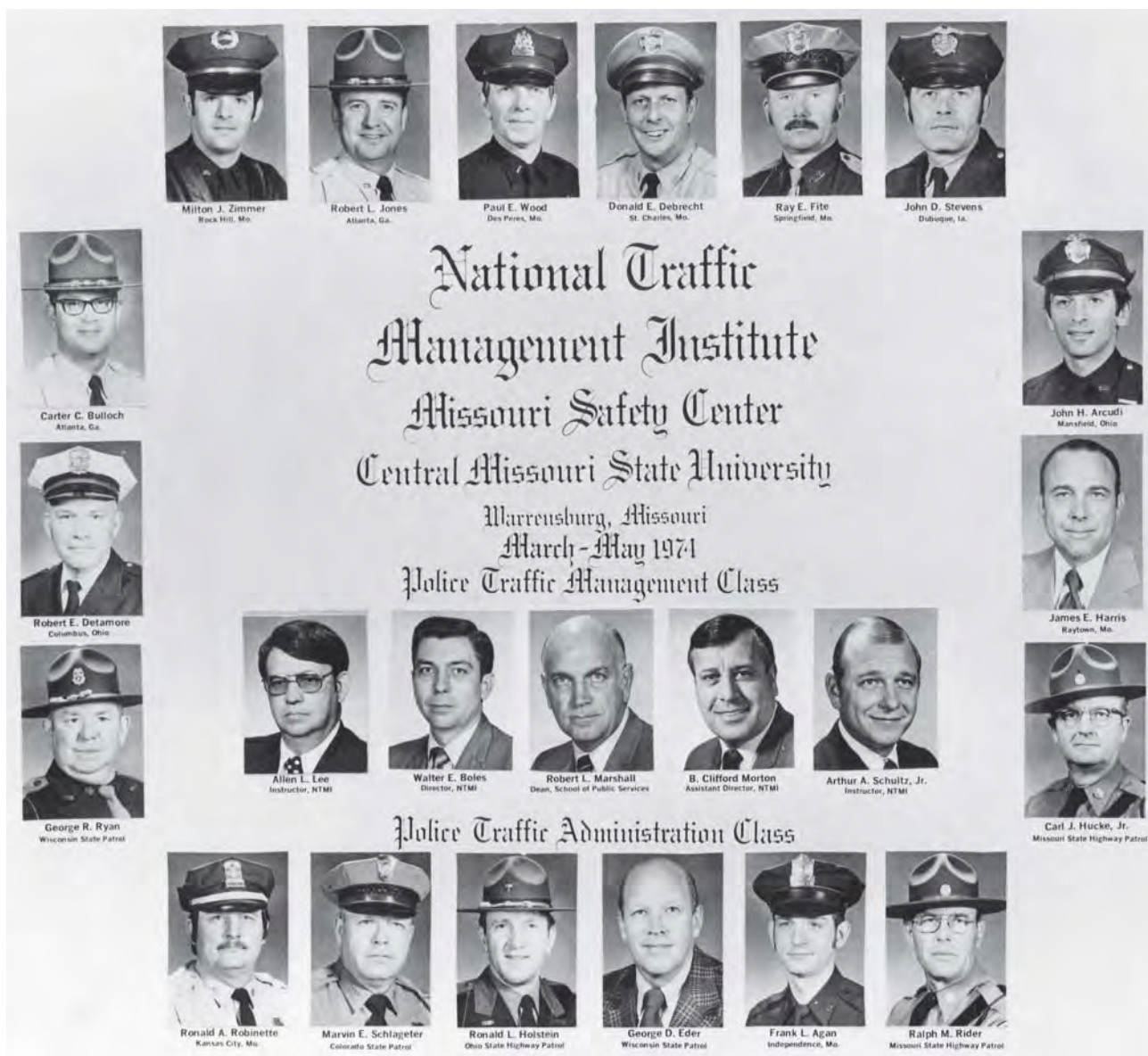
Ralph graduated from training on November 23, 1949, and was first assigned to Troop A.

"Troop A, Clay and Platte counties ... that was fine. Captain Viets was a good captain. Our zone sergeant was Olen B. Curtis. He had been a colonel in the Army in WWII. That was about even with being a sergeant on the Patrol back then. He was a great sergeant.

Hugh A. Wallace was my FTO. He was from Pleasant Hill. He was a great person. Sometimes on Sunday mornings, we'd warm up the plane, and we'd go up and look around. You learn so much with your FTO. He was a great leader. He finally became the troop commander at Troop F. Shortly after that, he died of cancer. Hugh Wallace taught me there was one thing about the Highway Patrol: You could go in the front door to any place. You weren't second-class to anyone. I've been associated with some really bright people on the Patrol.

In Troop A, one thing I remember as much as anything is a lady who was trying to commit suicide over in Platte County. The county lines were not marked explicitly on Highway 71 when you came in toward Kansas City. I was rushing her to the hospital in the patrol car. Once, she gasped for breath. I said, "Lady, don't die here, I don't know which county I'm in." She didn't die.

It was always something. You had to expect the unexpected. Once there was a motorcycle reported stolen. I checked two motorcycle rallies that day, but didn't locate that motorcycle. I remembered the license number and found it and the thief the next day in Sedalia on my day off. Took him in to Sedalia Police Station. Tpr. Glen Means took charge and wrote the reports, which was a big job.



*This photo shows the police traffic administration class Ralph attended through Central Missouri State University, Warrensburg, Missouri, in 1974.*

In 1952, when Truman was here with his 35<sup>th</sup> Division reunion in Springfield, he would take his morning walk and I'd putt putt alongside on my motorcycle. He'd be on the sidewalk and I'd be on the street. That was a must. If something happened to him, I could pursue or radio what happened. He was a very gracious person. His plane landed at Springfield Airport. It wasn't Air Force One, then. It was the Sacred Cow. Anyhow, he stood right at the walkway before he boarded the Sacred Cow. He asked every one of us to come

by and shake his hand. He thanked every one of us. There were a lot of troopers, sheriffs, and Springfield police officers on this assignment."

Ralph transferred to Troop F, Jefferson City in 1956.

"When I arrived in Camden County there were five badges in the county—the sheriff, one deputy, Camdenton city marshal, state conservation agent, and me. I worked night and day.

At this time, in communities like this, there were not many opportunities to work

together. Either you did it or it didn't get done. That's about the size of it. The sheriff's office was very sparsely staffed and only during the daytime; city police officers were very few, also. So, you just had to do it. My phone number has always been in the public book. People called me at home a lot.

I always have felt strongly about taking part in the community and making it better. You could see the integrity of the population was good here [Camden County]. There was a group of very good residents here. Since I came here because I wanted to, I wanted to help it become an even better community. That was the reason for the feeling I always had here. If it's legal we'll help you. That's a "Rider-ism". Another one is: With age comes wisdom, but not necessarily. (Some of the men, as we got a few more people, were always asking me about the Rider-isms.)

I stayed involved in the local Methodist Church. When the Methodist Church Conference told us we would build a church in Camdenton, I was chosen to be building committee chairperson. Later I was bond sales chairman, trying to pay for building the church.

In 1964, the papers said I was kidnapped, but it was only for about 10 minutes. Some people were shooting in this little one horse resort—it had two cabins. The sheriff didn't have anyone to send, so they called the Highway Patrol. When I got there, I found three men. They had a stack of jeans about three feet high that they'd obviously stolen, and they had lots of change. While I was digging through the stack of jeans, I came upon a .38-caliber revolver. I said, "We better go into the sheriff's office and check on this. We can't check on this on the radio here." Radio service has improved a lot since.

I wanted to get them out of there. So, we started. At that time, once we were in

our car, we had to take our revolver out of our holster and put it under our right leg. That way, it didn't show, and we were closer to it than the person we were taking in. The fella right behind me got his arm around my neck and lifted me up. Being an obedient trooper, I had my lap belt on. He got me stretched as far as he could. He yelled to one of the other guys, "Get his gun!" The man reached for my holster and said, "He doesn't have one!" But, the first guy had me stretched and they found the gun. The second guy handed the gun to the fella behind. I waited wondering, "*What's going to happen now?!*"

Instead of a loud explosion, there was a hard knock on my forehead, which left a gash requiring 22 stitches to close. Being about half bright, and the spirit of survival being very strong, I slumped down and played 'possum. We'd just started to leave, and when he lifted me up, my foot came off the gas and the car stopped. They dragged me out and wrapped me in a fishing seine on the ground. Then, they went back to their cabin and loaded their car. One of them came back to check on me. One asked, "Is he was still breathing?" I was thinking I wanted to live through this, too.

They took my car and drove up a side road a little ways and parked it. They took the ignition wire (from the distributor to the coil). Key or no key, you couldn't get it started. They left. Since they'd come back and checked on me a time or two, I decided I wasn't going to blow this now. I waited until I heard the squirrels. They'd checked on me enough times I was still apprehensive. Finally, I heard a squirrel chattering away. I figured that was a good sign. He wouldn't be out there if they were still around. (As an aside, I haven't shot a squirrel since then.)

I always had a clothes hanger with me. I just stuck it between the coil and the distributor cap and started the car. That diesel mechanic school paid off."





*Retired Sergeant Ralph M. Rider holds the plaque recognizing his being the grand marshal for the 2001 Dogwood Festival parade, 2005.*

Ralph was promoted to corporal in 1968, and designated assistant zone commander, Zone 4, Camden and Miller counties.

"We dropped Morgan County from the zone and it went with Moniteau County to form a new zone. We had a few more people down here at that time.

Trooper Herb Thomas and I worked a really strange case together, where several children and an infant were shot. Herb was in on that pretty strongly—the Smith murders. I stayed out at the house where the children were murdered, and Herb was in town. It was horrible in that we didn't have anything to go on. There was no suspect. He talked to the Camdenton city police officer and we worked out an agreement to contact friends of the victims in order to develop a

suspect. The only thing we could do, in my opinion, was to talk about the victims. Go to school and find out everything we could about the victims. We had to start some place. That's where he got the thing going. It was real good work on Herb's part. The case concluded with the arrest of a classmate of one of the victims, a juvenile, and the arrest of an adult. (He was old enough to drive the juvenile to the home where the murders took place.)

Years ago, you just went. There was no one else to call on. If you thought someone needed help, you went. The Patrol has changed a lot. It used to be a captain, a lieutenant, a zone sergeant for each zone—that was all. Then, we got safety sergeants they called them. It changed then. Sergeants weren't necessarily leaders. It changed the make up of the Patrol. I was always proud to have been a zone sergeant, because you were responsible for people and not only for things."

On May 16, 1974, Ralph was promoted to sergeant.

"I was training a new man down here—James Meissert. I was going over his papers and I noticed he was born on the same year I came on the Patrol. He's retiring this year [2005]. I trained Meissert and Herb Thomas trained Vince Ellis.

Times have changed. We never locked our door at home. One time, I got off about 11 o'clock at night and a car drove up. A man came in and said, "Hey, Ralph, there's a wreck down here. You need to go." After that, I locked the door. If they wanted to see me that badly, I figured they could knock.

If I figured up the overtime, I'd probably have about six months or seven months, maybe eight months of overtime. I think they figure eight hours per day now. It used to be 10 hours. Then, we got four days a month off ... only one Saturday and one Sunday. When Lu and I got married, we used all four days for our honeymoon ... had a long weekend."



Looking back on your career, would you do it all over again?

"Yes. In fact, I could probably pass the physical. Yes, I'd do it again, and I'm 83. The pay didn't amount to much. But, it was high adventure."

Ralph retired from the Patrol on May 1, 1979. But, did he really retire?

"No. I guided fishermen for a while. Then, finally, I bought a tackle shop and guide service at Tan-Tar-a Resort. When I hit age 65 I thought it was time to retire. I didn't like that retirement, either. I just don't like to retire."

Ralph served as a Camden County sheriff and later, chief of police for Lake Ozark. While he was sheriff, Ralph initiated the first county supported Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program in the school system. Throughout the years, he remained active in community service. He was involved in Little League baseball in Camden County, and helped reactivate the Boy Scouts organization that had been inactive for some time. Ralph is an active member of the Camdenton United Methodist Church. Ralph received many accolades over the years, not the least of which was a resolution from the Missouri House of Representatives for outstanding work in law enforcement. In 2001, he was chosen grand marshal of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Dogwood Festival Parade.

"I'd led that parade for years, and now, I got to ride in a convertible.

About that resolution: Two Pulaski County deputies served a search warrant on a man in Pulaski County—I believe it was for burglary. The subject had a gun and got the drop on them. He disarmed them, and left them handcuffed together. K.K. [Johnson] was in the airplane flying right alongside the car when I got the car stopped. This subject was in a '56 Chevrolet, which had the glove compartment in the middle of the dash, not on the

side. I knew he had a gun, because he'd disarmed those deputies. He started to reach for that gun and I shot him with my shotgun. His car ran off the road and did minor damage to a small building.

They had a coroner's jury. It was held down in Springfield. It was determined the shooting was done legally and properly.

"About a week later, I got a call. I was to meet his mother and dad at the dealership where the car had been towed. They'd come out to pick up the car. If anyone else had been working, they would have gotten the call. But, here I was. I'd just shot their son, and I had to go meet them and release his car to them. I was concerned about how the contact was going to go. I got there and saw their Illinois license at the dealership, and I walked up to them. The woman got out and said something like, "Well, at least we know where he is now." I was relieved. She elaborated a little, and explained they didn't know where he was quite often."

The 74<sup>th</sup> General Assembly issued House Resolution No. 275, recognizing Ralph, "for consistently displaying courage and valor in the daily performance of duty."

Ralph attended the National Traffic Management Institute at the Missouri Safety Center, at CMSU, in Warrensburg, MO, from March to May 1974. He attended the police traffic administration class.

"The CMSU National Traffic Management Institute was very helpful. They had good instructors. Matter of fact, I brought one back down here, and took him fishing. It just so happened that my son lived in a dorm right across the street from our dorm getting his degree in criminal justice while I was up there. My school lasted three months.

I got to spend a week in Canada fishing with Harold Ensley. He had a TV show that was called the "Fisherman's Friend".

One time he and Colonel Hockaday were in the same place for a meeting. They were trying to figure out how to reward some people on the Patrol. They wondered what to use for criteria. Hockaday said community service. Ensley said, "Let's take them fishing." (That was the only Memorial Day weekend I was stationed at the lake that I didn't work the tourist traffic.)

I'm still a member of the planning and zoning committee for the city of Camdenton. I was police commissioner for years. As an old fisherman would say, "I just like to keep my oar in the water."

The greatest thing to happen to me locally was being the grand marshal of the Dogwood Parade. It really made me feel good, because this was in 2001. I'd retired from the Patrol in 1979. Then, I was sheriff one short term and chief of police in Lake Ozark. Made me feel good. That's one of the things I wanted when I transferred out of Kansas City. It was a heavily populated area. Up there, a person would say, "Some cop told me this," or "Some cop told me that." Down here, it was, "Ralph told me." They never needed to use my last name. It was never Mr. Rider.

Originally on the Patrol, we were called "a group of gentlemen who enforce the law." If I were to talk to a recruit class, I'd tell them, "Every one of you is standing where I want to be." It is really worthwhile. You have the opportunity to do so much good. Then, you feel the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile. It's a great life.

*(This interview took place in November 2005.)*

# DONALD E. SELVEY

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*Retired Sergeants Ron and Don Selvey were the first set of twins to join the Patrol, and the only set of twins to retire. Both Selveys tell a great story and possess a terrific sense of humor. Don served the Patrol for over 35 years, sharing both his commission date and his retirement date with his brother. He caught criminals and worked fatalities, was threatened and shot at. "Some times, I was glad to get home," he said. Today, Don and Thelma's two sons, Sgt. Tony D. Selvey, Q/GD, and Sgt. Timothy R. Selvey, Troop D, serve and protect the citizens of Missouri. "We're so proud ... They've done really well."*

"I was born in Lamar, Missouri. Roy Selvey was my dad and Essie Selvey was our mother. He was a farmer. Childhood memories ... playing baseball every time we ate a meal. We ate real fast so we could go play baseball. There were four of us close in age."

Ron joined in on the conversation, "With our dad, we had enough men in our family to have a baseball team—eight boys and three girls."

Don, "One of those girls played baseball as good as anybody. We used to play horseshoes at the noon hour. Some of our best memories were when we went to Ozark Grade School a quarter of a mile from our house. The funnest time was PTA. As soon as our chores were done, we'd run up to the school and run ... run ... run ... at PTA. Didn't have televisions then. We spent our time riding calves and horses. Playing ball and enjoying life."

After graduating from Lamar High School in May 1947, three Selvey brothers began farming together.



*Trooper Don A. Selvey*

"Three of us brothers moved to a farm home 10 miles from our own home. We engaged in farming together. Bob is a year older than we are. Bob cooked most of the time. Ron did some of the time. I never did. Bob married my wife's sister, so we're brothers-in-law ... we used to be brothers (laughs). They were married a week before we were."

Bob went to service during the Korean War. Ron and I joined the reserves and continued farming. We joined the reserves so we could go together. Dad bought a car from a Chrysler dealer from Carthage, Missouri. The man selling the car was a captain in the reserves. He begged Dad to get us to come talk to him so we could go together. That was encouraging, so we did that.

I was in the infantry. We were on the rifle team several years, and have some trophies."

Ron, "Remember the first time we shot a rifle? You'd turned in your score. Then, I

turned in mine. We'd turned in identical scores. There were differences in the parts of the score, but the same total."

Don, "One year Ron won the division. A couple of years later I got it.

A general invited us to ride on his airplane back to Joplin. That was an honor. He also asked us to join an Army rifle team for him. We told him at that time we were going to try to get onto the Patrol (1953). He said, "I respect that, but, should you ever need a job in your lifetime look me up."

The captain [Patrol] asked that as soon as we met our obligation we'd get our discharge. There were scheduling conflicts. It was a long drive from Greenfield to Joplin, and we had to go every Monday night."

Don joined the Patrol on October 4, 1953.

"We were standing in the school yard when we were in grade school, which was by the highway. We might have been 10 or 11 years old. Ron and I were standing by the fence. Here comes a patrol car. We waved at him. He not only waved, but he honked at us. From then on, we never talked about any other occupation, but to be on the Highway Patrol some day.

We made application. Ron was married the night before the day we had to go to Jefferson City to take the test. After the testing, I came home in the pickup and they went on their way. Probably in September, I get a telegram having been accepted on the Patrol. Ron didn't get one. I thought a long time about accepting. I didn't know whether to accept it or not. If he wasn't going, I wasn't. I did go ahead and accept. A sergeant came and found us west of Lamar. He wondered why one accepted and another didn't. The colonel sent him down. Ron said he never got a telegram. The sergeant said, "You were supposed to." They read the same. So, Ron went into the telegraph office and sent a message. Something like, "I never

did get a telegram, but if I was supposed to, I accept."

Found out later the operator thought there was two of the same message. There were only two letters different between them.

So, October 4, 1953, we reported to Sedalia fairgrounds and began our training. We went to school for eight weeks. Extensive training on accident investigation, criminal investigation, pursuit driving, firearms training, fingerprinting ...everything. We were busy the whole time. Never allowed to leave the grounds except on Sunday on the fourth week. They took us to the barbershop and then back to the fairgrounds. By the time eight weeks was up, we were ready to see some new scenery.

We were both sent to the Springfield office. As I remember, Ron worked in Springfield for a week, and then was sent to Neosho. I stayed in Springfield.

One of the most interesting details ... It was long. In September 1954, I went to Jefferson City to the penitentiary."

Ron, "Gabriel went to a horse show, and they confused it with me. So, I didn't get a call. I was the only one who didn't get a call. I was really upset."

Don, "The message was a little interesting. When I went 10-8, they said, "Use red light and siren. Disregard all stop signs and yellow lines." I was clear to Buffalo, Missouri, before I heard there had been a prison break. Until then, I didn't know what had happened. I immediately went to a staging area where we were put into groups. We went to various halls and locked doors. The next morning, we went in and started searching cells for weapons and contraband. It was a hectic day, I remember. Some officers had to use major force before we got there.

We were all armed with shotguns and sidearms. That's the only time officers were in the prison with weapons. We were



lined up shoulder to shoulder and the prisoners had to walk between our lines to go to the cafeteria.

My wife didn't have any idea where I was until late that next afternoon. She called the troop and asked if there was a reason, "why Don hadn't come home last night". They told her I was in Jefferson City at a prison riot.

In 1955, I was sent to St. Joseph to a national corn-husking contest. We were there for crowd control and traffic control. That was another special assignment ... probably for a week. I don't remember how many days we were up there.

I had more than one FTO. Sgt. Wallace was our zone sergeant. Trooper Mumford was the main one I rode with; Trooper Colvin some—Trooper Kenny Walker some, and G.B. Tatmeyer. I remember I'd go a month at a time. They were all extra good people.

Worked the road in Springfield in 1954 and 1955. Then transferred to Greenfield, Missouri. I was the first trooper to ever live in Greenfield. The zone was 100 miles long and 30 miles wide. Many times, I'd be by myself. Five of us shared that zone for a long time. One time I rode with Danny Walker. Ted Anderson is another. Some really nice fellas I worked with.

In Greenfield, in 1969, I was promoted to corporal and moved to Nevada, MO, in Vernon County. Our zone included Barton County. In April 1973, was promoted to sergeant and transferred to Aurora as zone sergeant until 1981.

Our sons went on the Patrol Aug 1, 1978. When either of our sons got off, they'd come visit. Invariably, I would be working a shift. In 1981, Capt. Hoffman asked me to take MVI at Carthage, Missouri. It involved more than motor vehicle inspections. Held that job until June 1, 1989.

One time in the '60s I'd arrested an intoxicated driver in the afternoon, and was

in the city hall in Greenfield giving a breath test. The phone rang, and I was the only one in there, so I answered the phone. Sheriff's wife called and said, "Don, that girl got away from him and pulled a gun on him." I said, "What girl?" The sheriff had left and gone to the square and arrested someone. I told her, "I have a prisoner right now." Sheriff came to the jail and said he'd take the prisoner to jail for me. "The girl ran west, start looking for her if you will." I got in my patrol car and went over there.

A person told me that girl was in one of these two houses or the Methodist church. I went in the church and called out. I heard footsteps coming. I had my gun in my hand—didn't know what we had. This girl came around the corner and pointed the gun right at me. I told her no one was going to hurt her and she said, "You leave me alone. I'm going to kill you."

I talked fast and she ran again. I caught up with her, and she repeated, "You leave me alone. I'm going to kill you." She ran and I followed. I saw her through a window into a room. She was stepping out a window and the sheriff was just then walking up. He had her boyfriend with him. She handed the sheriff the gun and stepped out the window.

At the hearing later, I learned she was just 16 years old. I told what happened. After the hearing, her mother asked me why I didn't kill her. I told her I didn't know. Turns out, girl was a mental case—got wrapped up with these boys drinking beer.

I was just finishing my tour of duty one day when this man I knew stumbled out of his house and could hardly move. He held onto the house, then the porch. I pulled over, thinking if he drove that car I was going to pull him over. He got into the car and drove to a liquor store. I pulled in behind him. A friend of his said, "Hey, Don wants to see you." The man got in that car and ran. He was driving ditch to ditch



*Retired Sgt. Don Selvey at his brother's home in 2005.*

with his arm pointing back at me to shoot. He hit a parked car. When he finally stopped, I rammed right into him.

Three hours later he still tested .36 BAC. At .50, you'll die. You eliminate about two points per hour. He was charged with drunk driving, threatening with a firearm, leaving a scene of an acci-

dent, and resisting arrest. It all happened in a few minutes.

There was one wreck after another in my life, until I got on motor vehicle inspection. Then, it was constant phone calls; people coming in with titles. At one time, we had a parking lot full of stolen vehicles. A dealer would test drive a car and get a key made. Then he'd go back at night and steal it. He'd find a vehicle and switch VIN plates.

I got involved in a hot car operation out of Monett, Missouri. Recovered about 50 cars. They'd go to Chicago and bring the vehicle to Monett then send to Alabama for a registration. At that time, it wasn't a title state. That man went to the penitentiary. He was a reputable car dealer and got to doing that. (That was when I was zone commander.)

Ron and I enjoyed being on the Patrol pistol team for many years—six or seven years. Each troop would have their pistol training/qualifications. They'd take their top six people and go to Jefferson City and have a match. You worked the road your regular hours. Once in a while you'd be told to go to Springfield for training,



*Retired Sergeant Don and Thelma Selvey (left) stand with Mrs. Donna Selvey and Ret. Sergeant Ron Selvey, 2005.*

and there was one day we went to Jefferson City. That was in the early '60s.

We were sent to the riots in Jefferson City when they burned down the student union at Lincoln University. Went to the riots in Kansas City, when they tore it up when they didn't allow schools out for Martin Luther King's funeral. One of those years, we were sent to Branson where they filmed the Beverly Hillbillies. We enjoyed that. We were there for crowd control. Thelma took a picture, so I could carry it." (Don pulls a faded picture of Ron, Ellie Mae from the Beverly Hillbillies, and Don from his wallet.) "We have pictures of Granny ... all of them."

Looking back on your career, would you do it all over again?

"Yes, in a minute. Never dreaded going to work. Sometimes, I was sure glad to get home. Some unpleasant duties ... some of the scenes you see make you glad to get home.

We were assigned to a special assignment in Carthage one night. We were riding together. We got a call ... we found one gentleman had a concealed weapon. We arrested him. Ron went in to testify. He came out and I went in. The judge said, "Wait a minute. Have your brother come in. I want the jury to see you side-by-side." The jury laughed. Of course, so did the judge. He said he didn't want the jury to think we were trying to pull one over on them—there were two witnesses.

Retirement is the funnest job they've ever invented. We enjoy ever minute of it. I live north of Lamar right in the heart of a large farming operation my brother has. Carl is the youngest in the family and farms the biggest. I enjoy golf ... I haven't golfed near as long as Ron has. I try to catch up with him, but I can't."

How did you meet Thelma?

"I'd heard Thelma existed. Went to Boots Drive-In Café. We went down to get a cold drink or something and I saw her

there. We visited a lot. It mushroomed after that and she's kept me all these years. We were married January 10, 1954, after I came on the Patrol.

We have three children all born in September, two years apart. Two of them were born on the same day in different years. Our two sons are sergeants on the Patrol. Tony is in the Gaming Division and Tim is in Troop D. Our daughter is a registered nurse. She teaches nursing in a votech school in Harrisonville, MO. Her husband is a lieutenant on the Harrisonville Police Department. His name is Jay Boyd. Elaine is taking more training to become a nurse practitioner in psychology. We have seven grandchildren and one great grandchild, just over a year old, a boy.

I think it's wonderful [that Tony and Tim are members of the Patrol]. We're so proud that they made the grade and got onto the Patrol. They have really done well."

*(This interview took place in November 2005.)*



# RONALD A. SELVEY

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*Retired Sergeants Ron and Don Selvey were the first set of twins to join the Patrol, and the only set of twins to retire. Both Selveys tell a great story and possess a quick wit. Ron served the Patrol for over 35 years, sharing both his commission date and his retirement date with his brother. "I never once dreaded coming to work," said Ron. He had his share of experiences—catching criminals, working horrific fatalities, and shortly before retirement, a potentially life-threatening experience during a traffic stop. Ron relates that and many other stories in this interview.*

"Our parents were Roy and Essie Selvey. We lived on a farm. She was a stay-at-home mom—with 11 children, you almost have to. We had dairy cows and grew crops. When we first started out it was all horses. In 1941, Dad got a tractor. By the time we got out of high school, we used just tractors.

We (Ron and his twin, Don) embarrassed our sisters when we were real little. We disrobed and went out and sat on the gate. A car went by. They were 10 or 11 years older than we were and they thought that was terrible. To my knowledge, my twin brother and I never did fight. We were always close friends. We used to enjoy grabbing a cow by the tail and sliding on our feet like we were skiing. We wore out shoes pretty fast until our mother caught on and that stopped. There were two younger than us, the rest were older. Our parents and two oldest brothers are deceased. There are still eight of us children living. The rest of them live in the Lamar area.

I met Donna, my wife, at the skating rink. She couldn't skate and I had to hold her up. I've been holding her up ever since. She was too young to date then, but I wasn't.



*Trooper Ron A. Selvey*

She was a freshman cheerleader and continued four years in school being a cheerleader. We'd go to ballgames and things together. We got married August 30, 1953. Two of our children live in Bolivar, one lives in Jefferson City, and one lives in Plano, TX. Roger is the regional vice president for Glaxo Smith Kline Pharmaceutical (Texas), and has two children. Peggy is married with three children; Cammie is married with three children. Rhonda is married to Dale Penn, a major on the Patrol. They have three children.

I graduated Lamar High School in 1947. We have a brother a year older than us twins. We moved to a farm nine miles west of Lamar, rented a house out there, and farmed after high school. That's what we were doing when we went on the Patrol. Fourteen hundred acres doesn't sound like much now, but it was quite a bit then. Bob is just a year older than us and had to go to the Army, so the two of us were left alone there a couple of years.



We chose to join the reserves thinking that would allow us to get our crops harvested. They assured us our unit wouldn't be activated until the fall after our crops were harvested. We heard later there was a typographical error, and they activated the inactive ... left the active reserves at home. That's why we continued to farm. My last assignment was a master sergeant in the heavy weapons platoon — 106 recoilless rifle. It was a jeep with a small canon on the back ... wasn't really a canon, but it shot a large shell—lots of noise. Don was in a rifle company. We had meetings every Monday night and camp in the summer.

We'd always admired the appearance of the Patrol officers when we were small boys. We decided some day that's what we wanted to be. We never got over it."

They were appointed October 4, 1953.

"Don got his telegram accepting him as a recruit and I didn't get one. I blamed that on getting married. But, turned out a western union clerk saw the two messages and thought they were the same message. She threw one away.

Sergeant Tom Loy came to the house because Don had accepted and I hadn't answered. He came to the house and said, "Your brother accepted his, why didn't you?" I told him I didn't get a telegram. "Oh, you didn't get one? You were supposed to." He sent me to Western Union to send a message of my acceptance provided the offer was still in effect. Western Union didn't make me pay for that. Said it was their mistake.

We were the first set of twins on the Patrol and only ones to retire. Another set came on in 1958. They were Joe and Jerry Hart. They stayed several years and then resigned.

That was probably the first time we'd ever been away from home that long. It was eight weeks. We didn't get to come

home at all. Our family got to come see us at the middle of the training. That's the only contact we had except letters. Didn't have access to a telephone or anything, so we just wrote letters. There were 30 in our class. It was strenuous—mental and physical. But, all you had to do was want to complete it. We made up our minds we were going to complete it and we did.

We had some awfully good instructors. I remember Sgt. E.V. Nash and Sgt. Usher were two of our supervisors. They were awfully nice fellas; we really liked them. They'd bring people in from the road and headquarters to teach certain classes. We had some mighty good instructors.

I liked all of our classmates. We had one classmate that made us run awful hard. Years later, he resigned. His name was Paul Moore, and he was from Poplar Bluff. He was tall and lanky and could run a long ways pretty fast. Some of us had trouble keeping up with him. He really tired us out. We got along with him all right. They saw quick he was the one to put out there to make us run faster.

We had some softball games. I used to pitch a little softball, and I thought I could pitch. I pitched one inning then they put Bill Searce in there. He could really burn it in there. I didn't pitch any more after that.

Right after we graduated, it wasn't too many years and the Academy moved to Rolla. Ours was in Sedalia, at the state fairgrounds; we lived in the women's building. We had to heat the building using antiquated fireplaces. Of course, at night they'd all go out. We went from the fourth of October until the last of November—the 25th.

Don was assigned to Springfield and I was assigned to Neosho. We worked a few days in Springfield. We were awfully naïve when we first went on. We'd believe anything anyone ever told us. We'd never hardly heard an off-color joke. Never had much occasion to interact with people. I was riding with Kenny Walker, and some-

body else was going to take me back to the motel that night—stayed there three or four days. Kenny goes in and gets on the radio and says tell officer 329 that recruits are required to replace light bulbs when they go out, and the top light in the tower is out. He'll have to be in here at 5 a.m. in the morning and replace that bulb.

I thought, "I'll die doing it, but I'll try it." I got busy and found an alarm clock. One of the recruits said, "Hey, Ron, you do know they're joking with you." "I said no, I guess I'll have to do it." Sgt. Kenny Walker and Glen Wilson were the ones involved in that little prank. I thought I was going to have to climb that tower. For the rest of the time we used that headquarters, every time I came in, I'd look up and see how tall that tower was. Still glad I didn't have to climb it ... I just knew I wouldn't make it.

I wouldn't fall for that today. I'd say, "You show me that in writing, after the signature's on it!" We thought we had to do everything we were told. It's still with me. I never did get even with them over that. I was greatly relieved when I found out they were joking. I

didn't want to climb that tower at all. Here it was the first part of December, cold and windy.

They were just having fun. Kenny was my sergeant in Neosho for a long time. He was stationed there in Springfield when I first started. I worked there about a week before they transferred me to Neosho. Vic McKee was my field training officer. He became captain of Willow Springs before he retired.

There were just the three of us [in Neosho]. Lewis Smith was there, too. They had the old saying, you take your uniform off, throw it across the bed, and then go put it back on, because you'd have to go back out. I seldom got a full night's rest. There was something happening in McDonald County all the time. Back then, it was part of the job, you never complained about it.

We rented a room from a little, old lady named Mrs. Rambo when we first went down there. She could hardly speak English. That lasted for three or four months, and we decided we needed to get our own house. We rented a place that cost us \$40

*This truck dumped a load of apples when it crashed. Ron said, "They came in handy" when he was working long hours later.*



per month. It wasn't a real fancy place. There was a floor furnace in the hall we had to step over. In 1954, our little one got a checkerboard on her bottom when she sat down on that one day. It was awful. We liked the area. Lived there a little over two years. A senator in McDonald County got the governor's and colonel's ears. They wanted a man assigned to McDonald County and I was the junior man. The first day in 1956, I went.

I was in MVI for two years. And in 1982, they asked me to be assistant safety officer for most of one year. I was never away from the road. I was either going somewhere on it, or working it. Frequently stopped someone on the way when I was going somewhere. I pretty much worked the road my entire career.

It was pleasant, but a lot of things you have to do weren't pleasant, like the terrible accidents. I had been on a shift on my own a short time, when I got called to an accident east of Granby. A big truck was just sitting there. A car with four people in it ran into the back of that truck. He must have been blinded by the sun. It killed all four. One of the back seat people's arms was in the front. I soon realized it was an artificial limb. My first thought had been, "Mercy sakes, what an impact."

I think that was my first time with one of those. Back then, you had to work it yourself. I couldn't call someone to come help me. You had to get the traffic around it and get all the measurements. I didn't have access to someone to come help me like they do now.

My most complicated accident was on a two-lane road northeast of Neosho, about 1958. The roadway was asphalt, and was very damp from sweating. A total of nine vehicles were involved, some going west and some going east. Some of them struck two or three vehicles. It was necessary to determine which vehicles collided and the location of the impacts. Then, everyone needed to fill out all the pages of a safety respon-

sible report to the director of revenue. All the damages were settled out of court.

Here's a story. Don was in Springfield at the time. I had pulled into a truck stop to eat supper. It was near the state line of Oklahoma. I had just finished eating. This man walked up and had the most confused look on his face. I looked up and spoke to him. He said, "I'd like to know something. How'd you get here so fast?" I said, "I don't know what you mean." He said, "You stopped me in Springfield and I've been driving as fast as I dared. Here you are, finished eating." I forget what I said. Probably something like, "I guess I took a short cut."

We stopped a drunk one night. He was causing trouble, got a loaded weapon out from under the seat of his car and charged him with a felony. We were at a roadblock south of Carthage after an armed robbery. We got a report this guy was relieving himself and cussing. Here he came. He had four people in the car with him. We stopped him and in the process of talking to him, we asked him if he was drunk. He said no he wasn't. So, I asked him if we looked alike. He said yes, and I replied, "See there, you think everybody looks alike." Then he said no, you don't look alike.

Later on, we had to go to court to testify; we were subpoenaed. I went in and testified and as I walked out the door, Don walked into the courtroom. You could hear the laughter. The judge had me come back in.

Lot of little things like that. My twin brother was eating his meal in Lamar (stationed in Nevada) when some friends of mine from Anderson (owned the telephone company) spotted him. She came over and said, "Hey, Ron, Vic's sitting back there, he'll probably come over and talk to you. Act like you're Don." He told her, "I am Don." She said, "No, not to me, to him." He said, "I'm telling you the truth, I am Don." She looked at him and said, "If you're Don, you don't know me and I'm not telling." Af-





*Ron Selvey: Tpr. Ron Selvey works a fatality motorcycle crash.*

ter he described her to me, I knew exactly who it was.

I worked an incident with a load of processed chickens. Truck driver went off the road and spilled them everywhere. He wasn't hurt. I worked the accident and I wrote him a ticket for careless driving. I told him he'd better get somebody out here to clean this up. He said he wasn't worried about it. His company said they belonged to the processing plant. I got hold of the chicken plant, and they said it belonged to the insurance company. Finally got hold of the insurance company and the guy was in Neosho and had gone out to supper. While I was looking for him, people were helping themselves to the chickens. It turned out to be an interstate shipment, and the FBI got involved. It was kind of a stressful situation. The sheriff's wife brought some to my wife. When I found out about it, I called her and told her

to come back and get them. I didn't want to be in on that. Everything turned out OK for me.

There were lots of incidents like that. Beer trucks and whiskey trucks — the proceeds of those could be cleaned up in a hurry. Had an apple truck turn over one time. Put a couple of good ones in my car. A couple of days later, I got called to a bank robbery and couldn't get away to eat. I never will forget—I was thankful I had those two apples. They came in handy.

I never once remember ever dreading going to work. I think that sums it up pretty good. If you don't like your work, you'll dread going to work.

Back when we had to sign warnings for people for headlights, taillights, and mufflers and different things, they had

to take the warning to an officer to inspect it once it was fixed. For that period of time, I didn't get any free time at all. They'd come to my house in convoys. Didn't matter what day it was or what time of day it was. Never got to eat a meal in peace. If I was on duty, it was a breeze. But, Bob Harper would write a warning to somebody and they wouldn't want to drive clear out to his house. I lived closer to town. With this program, they either fixed the car or they were summoned into court. I was glad the program ended.

One Fourth of July, there were four young fellows got themselves some false identification and came to Noel. It showed them old enough to purchase liquor and they had too much. That night, they got about five miles west of Noel, and hit an approach to a bridge. It threw them out of the car and of course, they all died. The motor was in the back seat. It was one of



the worst accidents I'd seen in a long time. I can't tell you what year that happened, but it's sure fresh in my memory. Then along comes another bunch of people who'd had too much. They caused a bit of confusion out there ya-yaing around.

In Noel, a train blew up and destroyed the whole town. The huck box caught fire on one of the wheels and ignited some feed. I'd heard it was a bomb, but never got any proof. The railroad rebuilt the whole town. There were two explosions. The first one woke me up out of bed. I lived in Anderson then. I thought something fell off a shelf. I laid back down; heard a siren go by. Then there was another siren ... then another. Then the phone rang and I was told, "Need you down in Noel."

I think the worst wreck I'd investigated was about six or seven miles south of Neosho. A lady who was a friend of ours veered to the wrong side of the road and hit a small car with eight people in it. All but two were killed. One fellow said he'd carry a baby if I wanted to take it in. So I said, "OK, let's go." I was so shook up, I forgot to take him back with me after we got the baby to the hospital. It died later. There were three mothers and three babies. The car was up on its side when I first drove up. Somebody told me to give them the word, and they'd help turn the car up. When we righted the car, you could hear muffled cries. Lucille (our friend) was on the wrong side of the road.

I moved to Anderson the first day of 1956, so I'd worked there a few years. Then, Bob Harper came. I was happy to have another trooper. He turned out to be a really good friend. Bob was an excellent trooper after his break-in period. He was a big help to me. I was glad to have him. That was 1963.

One of the funniest things we did was Joe Cook wrote a little book called,



*Retired Sgt. Ron Selvey  
at his home in 2005.*

"Trooper Ticklers". He was a trooper. It was a funny book. He related an incident on April 1, 1973. The city police in Neosho, where we had our zone office kept playing tricks on the troopers. They'd tell us someone sideswiped our car and we'd go out there to check. That evening Jay Hall and I went to supper, and I said let's get even with these guys. He said, "I am for that." John Prine was working his first shift on his own. I said, "Let's go to Hawthorne Park." It was southwest of town.

We radioed each other talking about a trucker reporting a naked woman running across the road and into the brush. We sat there side-by-side talking about this. I told him if I guessed right, it wouldn't take long for a Neosho officer to want to help. It wasn't a couple of minutes and Neosho volunteered to help. I said it was just outside the city, but come ahead. He came out there. I told him it's a delicate situation, don't take your flashlight, just walk around this particular area. Pretty soon, he was coming around into where our headlights shone. I thought we'd better end this. I called to him said we had her in the car and we were going to take her in.

The guys at the station said they'd have the back door open, so we could drive right in. Then, I called John and Jay

to say I needed their help, she was trying to climb out the window. I told them if we drove inside the building, they'd shut the doors and we wouldn't be able to get out. They thought I was right. So, we parked in the dark. We got John Prine up there; he was innocent of the whole thing. So, the three of us parked in the dark and came walking around. There was a window that had about five heads sticking out of it. We came walking around there and said, "April fools!" Unbeknownst to us, Joplin and Carthage heard the radio and told everyone to stop traffic, there is a search going on near Neosho. They wouldn't talk to their cars. Of course, they told them not to say anything until the search was over.

Sgt. Walker had a scanner and was listening to it. He called on the phone and said, "Ron, my wife has some clothes and I'm going to bring them." I told him wait a minute. It was a joke. He'd had some jokes played on him. Tpr. Joe Cook had some friends over playing cards, and they'd quit playing and listened to it. The city officers told me, "Selvey, next year, somehow we're going to get even on this." Lo and behold, a month later I was promoted to sergeant and moved to Bolivar.

Don had been promoted to sergeant in Aurora just a few weeks before that. First thing I asked was if there was a Lutheran church. We moved here first of June and found there wasn't one close. We got busy and got one started. We had it in our home the first year. It's the Zion Lutheran Church. We went to Springfield for a while, but it was just too far. Got this one started here with two or three other families. Preacher came up from Springfield every Sunday evening.

We got involved in lots of manhunts. Lots of people do that. The biggest was one in McDonald County in 1984 or 1985, and I was asked to help. We finally caught one that night. I came home the next day after being up all night. Don was there

when they got the second. They'd been terrorizing people around the county for a while. It was a big manhunt. Seems like most of the manhunts get awfully long.

A year before I retired in 1989, a care-less driver was coming down Highway 13. Tpr. J.L. Walker got a call on it, but missed him. I caught him, so I stopped him. He had a warrant in Henry County. I searched his car and decided I was going to have to take him in to post bond. I put my nightstick in my holder and came up to him, told him to remain seated and put his hands behind him. He slowly started to rise up. I didn't think much of it, thought he didn't hear me. He hit me in the neck and grabbed me in a bear hug and shoved me off to the side of the road. I hit my head on a rock and was almost unconscious before three people pulled him off me. He turned out to be an escapee from a halfway house in Kansas City. It wasn't in the computer yet."

Would you do it all again?

"Yes, in a heart beat. I never regretted it.

We've enjoyed our retirement. We never worked anywhere else, just got along on our retirement. Then, Social Security came along and made it easier. She works a half day two or three days a week.

I have a tractor. I'll mow yards and do some tilling. It keeps me busy and I don't charge people much. My tractor has a loader, scoop, and tiller. There's always something that needs to be done. I play golf about every day. I do these gardens before I start playing golf and after I play in the early spring and summer—not a lot going on in the winter. I clean a lot of my neighbor's driveways. They appreciate that."

*(This interview took place in November 2005.)*

# ROBERT J. “BOB” HAGAN

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*Captain Bob Hagan began his career with the Patrol in 1956, as a driver examiner. He had some interesting experiences with applicants. In 1958, Bob became a trooper. He excelled as a member of the pistol team, and had numerous trophies in his basement, including the target he shot when tying a national record. Bob enjoyed the varied experiences of his career, which came through in this interview.*

Robert J. “Bob” Hagan was born in Perryville, Missouri, the son of Floyd and Pauline Hagan.

“I was born on a farm just outside of McBride, Missouri. We lived there until I was about seven years old. My dad was having a lot of medical problems with his kidneys, and he couldn’t handle the farm work as well. So, we moved to St. Louis, and he began working in the arms plant during WWII. I grew up there, and went to Beaumont High School. I had three older sisters and one younger sister.

Marcia was raised just a block up the street from me and a street over. We knew each other growing up and into our teens.

We have three children, two girls and a boy, five grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. They all live in the area.

I graduated from high school in 1953. About a month before I graduated from high school, I got a night job in a dinette factory as an upholsterer. We got married in January 1956.”

Bob served in the U.S. Naval Reserves from 1951 to 1959.

“Two weeks each year, we left to go to school or aboard a ship. Most of my trips after basic training were aboard ship. I got seasick every time.



*Tpr. Bob Hagan, 1962.*

I’ve known several troopers in Perry County and always thought a lot of them and the organization. Ray Hollman was one of them. He was one big man, he would stand at the intersection and lean on his arms on the roof of his ‘48 Ford patrol car. I spent all my summers in Perry County when I was out of school. My grandparents and several aunts and uncles lived there. I’d spend time with them in the summertime.

In August 1956, I applied for the Patrol. They asked me if I’d like to start out as a driver examiner because they had openings at the time, so I did that.

I enjoyed being a driver examiner. I spent my time in the St. Louis area. I was the first driver examiner in the state of Missouri to have an applicant die while taking the driving test. We were in Ferguson, Missouri, and we were just about halfway through the driver’s test. She’d just gotten to the corner making a turn and she said, “I don’t feel well.” In the middle of the turn, she leaned back in the seat, so I had to grab the wheel and get the car stopped. I called the fire depart-

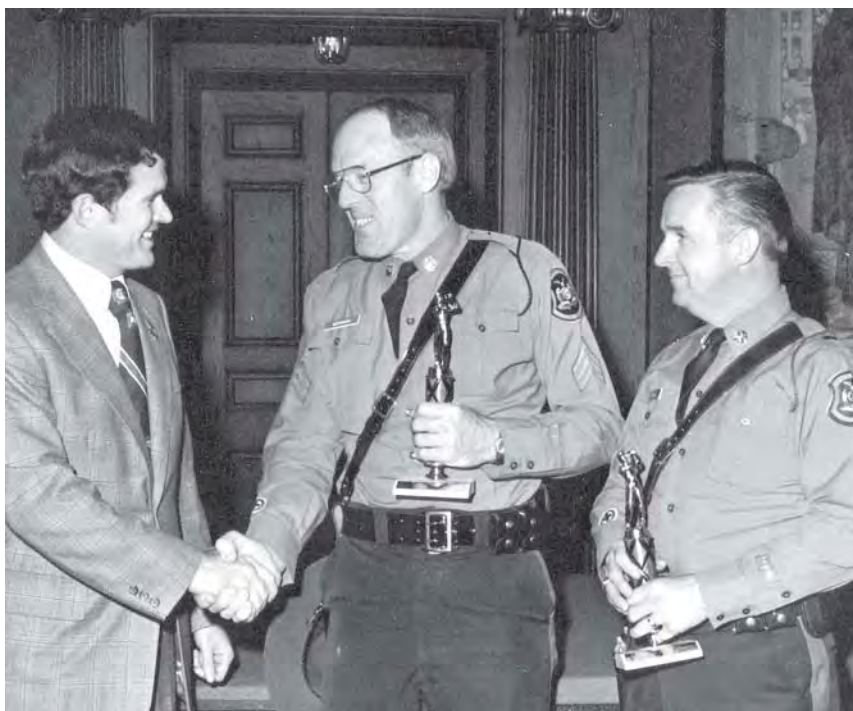


ment and local police. She was dead. Her husband said later that her doctor didn't want her to drive.

I was involved in several accidents while giving the driver's test. We had moved the examination office from Grand Avenue to 10th and Washington in downtown St. Louis, and the road test was given in the downtown area, which was always congested. While giving the driving test to a gentleman, I instructed him to make a right turn at the next corner. After making the turn, he held onto the steering wheel. We jumped the curb and drove into the side of a restaurant, knocking a large hole into the side of the brick building.

One other accident stands out in my mind. There was a high curb in front of the examination office on Grand Avenue where applicants would park to begin the driving test. We would have the applicant start the motor, and we would check the vehicle's signal lights and brake lights. Having done that, I got in the car with a lady and directed her to pull out when it was safe, and to drive down Grand Avenue. She put the car in reverse and turned the steering wheel hard to the left. She had her left foot on the brake and her right foot on the gas pedal. She was pushing down hard with both feet when her left foot slipped off the brake pedal. The car shot backward, the right front wheel jumped the curb, and we traveled backward across six lanes of Grand Avenue, and

*Governor Christopher "Kit" Bond congratulates Sgt. Roy Bergman and Lt. Bob Hagan. Sgt. Bergman and Lt. Hagan were members of the Patrol golf team that won the state employees' golf league championship.*



hit a car driving down the street. I was stepping all over her feet trying to get the car stopped. Surprisingly, no one was hurt. But, the lady didn't get her driver's license that day.

We always asked applicants for identification. For a young man, we would accept a draft card as ID. Some people who felt they couldn't pass the test would have someone else come in and try to take the test for them. A lot of the people in the area didn't have middle names, so their draft card would have "NMN" in that blank, which stood for "no middle name". One day a man came in and handed me a draft card. I asked him for his date of birth and then asked him what his middle name was. He made the sound for the letters "NMN". He had read the card and didn't realize what "NMN" stood for." He thought it was the person's middle name."

Bob began recruit training on October 12, 1958 at Rolla.

"We had to go to Rolla to take the examinations for trooper. I was notified by telegram that I was accepted for a class. It gave me the time and date to be there and what I needed to bring with me.



My wife drove me to Rolla. We said goodbye there and then we had 10 weeks of school. During the 10 weeks, training went from 6 a.m. when you get up for PT until our last class, which was over at 9 o'clock at night. We had one day we could have visitors. That was a Sunday after we'd been there about three weeks. My wife, her parents, and my two children came down. I got to see them for the day. Then, after six weeks, we got three days off and got to go home. Those were the only times I got to see my family. Ten weeks doesn't seem like a long time, but it is under those conditions.

We graduated from the Academy on December 20, and I was assigned to Troop C, which was comprised of 10 counties that surrounded the St. Louis area. We had about 10 days to find a place to live and to move. I was scheduled to start work on New Year's Day.

I was assigned to work the southern part of St. Louis County and the northern part of Jefferson County, where I worked until October 1961, when I was assigned to a radar car. We had two radar cars in the Zone 1 area, one on the day shift and one on the night shift. We had the only radar units in our zone and would work four weeks of days and four weeks of nights in all of St. Louis County, and parts of Jefferson and St. Charles counties.

By having the only unmarked car on our shift in the area, and not being assigned to a specific zone, I got to assist in quite a number of manhunts, both in Troop C as well as other troops. I also had to drive many dignitaries when they visited our area. One year, in the '60s, the Boston Red Sox played the St. Louis Cardinals in the World Series. I was assigned to drive Governor Volpe of Massachusetts and his group, who were in St. Louis for three games of the series. I had real good seats for all three games, directly behind the Boston dugout. But, the days were extremely long. The governor went to church every morning at

eight o'clock, and each night he was invited to dinner and to parties, so my workday started around 7 a.m. and ended around midnight. The worst part about that assignment was that my wife, Marcia, was a big Cardinals fan. A friend got us tickets for the first of the three games, but, I got the assignment on the morning of that game and I couldn't take her.

In the early-'60s the Patrol formed the Underwater Recovery Team. This was before the Water Patrol was formed, and at that particular time, there were no local diving clubs. We had two officers from each troop on the team. Al Lubker and I were the Troop C team. We had to pass a Red Cross lifesaving course in order to dive for the Patrol. Training was held at Camp Red Bud, at the Lake of the Ozarks. Any time evidence was thrown into water--a lake or stream--we made dives for that. We were very lucky in Troop C, we didn't ever have to dive for a body. I was part of the team for about three years. I had to leave because of a severe ear infection from diving. It was different and kind of exciting to be involved in something like that.

In the spring of 1968, I was assigned as assistant safety officer for Troop C. I really enjoyed that assignment, but it involved some extremely long hours. We gave safety programs for school classes of all ages in addition to almost every driver education class in the troop area. We also held safety meetings for a lot of large companies, such as, Union Electric and Bell Telephone. We had several weekly radio programs that we were on.

We were also weekly guests on a daily TV show called, "Mr. Patches". It was a children's show and Mr. Patches was a popular clown in St. Louis. Every Friday, he would have us on his show to talk to the kids about things such as, seat belts, school safety, and bicycle safety. I took my son and daughter to the show one day, and they got to be on TV. They really thought that was great.



*A National Rifle Association official presents Lt. Bob Hagan (right) with the target he shot. At this match, Lt. Hagan shot a perfect score, thus tying the national record.*

On October 1, 1968, I was assigned to attend the Southern Police Institute at the University of Louisville in Kentucky. It was a three-month school, and the classes we took were police administration and several criminal and constitutional law classes. I was elected class orator and gave the graduation address for our class.

After finishing at SPI, I returned to my job as assistant safety officer in Troop C. In addition, I was assigned to teach the law classes at the Patrol Academy in Rolla, for recruit classes and basic police classes. I would generally go to Rolla for two or three days at a time to teach classes on criminal law, rules of evidence, and arrest, search, and seizure. On one of my trips to the Academy, Roy Bergman and I were in the Academy kitchen having coffee before classes started, when Lt. Searce, who was director of the Academy, came in. It was very evident that he was upset, to say the least. Sometime during the night, the basic police class de-



*In 1981, Lt. Bob Hagan won first place in the inter-troop pistol match. Here, Lt. Colonel Paul Volkmer (right) presents the first place trophy Lt. Hagan.*

cided to have some fun. They all signed a pillowcase and in large letters printed, "HAGAN'S HEROES" on it, after the TV show "Hogan's Heroes". They ran the pillowcase up the flagpole in front of the Academy, and it was still there when Lt. Searce came to work. We didn't know anything about it; no one did but members of the class. I still have the pillowcase.

In August 1970, I was transferred to GHQ in Jefferson City, and assigned to the Personnel and Training Division. Later that year, I was promoted to sergeant. I worked in the personnel and training office and continued to drive to Rolla to teach until Spring 1971, when we moved the Academy to Jefferson City, and I was assigned to the Academy full time. I remained at the Academy until July 1972, when I was transferred to the Traffic Division.

At that time, the traffic division had accident records for the Patrol. They were in charge of the safety officers' activities for the state, and we had the driver examination program in Traffic. That is about the time we started implementing the STARS program (Statewide Traffic Accident Records System). I think we finally got

that going in 1973. That was a monumental task.

I was working with Lt. Endicott and Capt. Shadwell, who retired in early 1973. Lt. Endicott was promoted to captain. I was designated assistant director in the Traffic Division and was promoted to lieutenant in 1975. After moving to Jefferson City, I continued going to school at night, which I started while in Troop C. I earned my bachelor's of science degree in criminal justice administration from Lincoln University in 1980.

In 1983, Driver Examination was taken out of the Traffic Division and became a separate division. I was assigned there as director. I remained in DE until August 1988 when I was promoted to captain and placed back in charge of the Traffic Division. I remained in Traffic until October 1991, when I was transferred to the superintendent's office as staff assistant.

As staff assistant, I was given the job of setting up the troop inspection program. It was an enjoyable assignment, because it was just before I was going to retire, and I got to visit all of the troop headquarters' and satellite offices in the last nine months of my career. I retired on April 1, 1992.

One of my fondest memories on the Patrol was being able to shoot on the pistol teams. From the early '60s, I shot on the Troop C pistol team, and then on the state combat team when I moved to Jefferson City. We competed in the Police Olympics each year, as well as many other matches. Generally, we did very well. I don't remember exactly when the Patrol stopped sponsoring the pistol team, but when that happened, the team members continued participating on their own.

We had to work the pistol team into our schedules. Knowing the match was coming up, we had to schedule for it. It didn't get us out of anything. I enjoyed it. Back in the '80s I tied a national record on one of the firearm courses. I have the target downstairs. We used .38-caliber revolvers

much like our service weapon, but with a longer, heavier barrel and they had a much smoother action.

One year, the team members were Roy Bergman, Bob McDaniel, Rich Rehmeier, and myself. We shot in the Police Olympics in Raytown, in the Kansas City area. We all shot a perfect 100 percent score. I don't think I have ever seen all four members of a team shoot four possibles in the same match.

My wife, Marcia, retired the same year I did, and we traveled a lot the first several years. But, we have been about every place that we wanted to visit. Now, most of our time is spent here in Jefferson City with our friends and family, and on the golf course."

Bob, looking back over your career, would you do it all over again?

"Oh, yes."

*(This interview took place in August 2005.)*



*This patch was used by the Patrol's Underwater Recovery Team.*

*Ret. Capt. Bob Hagan at his home in Jefferson City, 2005.*





# MAURICE B. “RIP” RUSSELL

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*Rip Russell served the Patrol for almost 30 years. He was injured more than once while on duty. He worked the road 10 years, before serving as the MVI sergeant and then the CVE sergeant at Troop F. Rip said his experiences were “like that of every other trooper”. But, there’s something in the way he tells a story. His humor and his compassion came through in this interview.*

Maurice B. “Rip” Russell was born at home, the son of Willard and Gladys Russell. His nickname of “Rip” comes from childhood. His father moved from Ripley County to Fulton, Missouri. His father was known as “Rip” because of this. When Maurice was growing up, he became “Little Rip” and his father, “Big Rip”. As years passed, the “little” was dropped.

At the time Rip was born, his family lived in Fulton, seven miles from where he now resides.

“We were just country people living out here in the country. We didn’t have electricity, no modern conveniences, no indoor plumbing. I had two brothers and a sister. My two brothers are deceased. I was the baby. If my mother had lived to be 110, I’d have still been the baby.

I went to Sunrise School, a one-room schoolhouse, for the first through eighth grade. In 1945, my parents sold the farm and we moved to town. So, I started going to (Fulton) high school as a freshman. I didn’t get acquainted with June (his wife) until I was a junior.”

Rip’s wife, June, took up the story. “He used to come to my house and borrow something from my brother, Bob ... his roller skates. He was on the football team, so I knew who he was. He dated a mutual



*Tpr. Maurice B. “Rip” Russell, 1962.*

friend for awhile and then they stopped seeing each other. Later, he asked me for a date. Our first date was to go with another couple to the movies in Jefferson City.”

“I graduated from Fulton High School in 1950,” said Rip. “I liked the school and the athletics. I lettered four years in football, ran high hurdles in track—always had skinned knees. But, I wasn’t crazy about basketball.

After graduating I worked for International Shoe Company as a troubleshooter on their equipment. They sent me to Jefferson City, Poplar Bluff, etc. I worked for AP Green in Mexico, Missouri, after that. Then, in 1957, I went back to work for International Shoe Company. I think they folded up, because I went to Cabool and was working for a shoe company down there when I applied for the Patrol. I was accepted to go to the training school in Rolla beginning October 12, 1958.

It [joining the Patrol] was just something I thought I’d always like to do.



Poodle—Russell Breid—was a Fulton boy and was very sharp. His uniforms were tailor made, and when he brought them home, his wife re-did them. His equipment was immaculate. Every morning he washed his patrol car at the scale house, and when he went home in the evening, he'd wash it off again. When I came on, he was delivering cars around the state. He had a bad back and could no longer work the road. Russell was the one who really inspired me; the reason I joined the Patrol.

I managed to get through 10 weeks of training. Most of the men in training school when I was there had been in the service. Poor me, I was too young for WWII, and married and had too many dependents for the Korean War. Therefore, I didn't know my left foot from my right foot when I was marching. [Sergeant Ernest] VanWinkle was one of the instructors, and he threatened to get paint and mark them left and right.

Right off the bat in training they were working us pretty hard. This one Sunday, Sgt. VanWinkle decided to take it easy on us. We were just going to have light calisthenics ... He got the "medicine" ball, which was pretty heavy. We'd throw that around and catch it against our stomachs. The guy next to me threw it low, and I thought it was going to hit me where it shouldn't, so I put my hands down for protection. When I caught it, the ball bent my [little] finger back. VanWinkle asked me what happened and I told him I thought it was broken. He thought it was just out of joint. But, they sent me to the hospital and it was broken. They put a cast on it. It being my right hand, I couldn't fire my weapon ... they gave some of the tests orally. Some way we were able to struggle through and graduate 10 weeks after that. I was the first casualty in the class. Had a cast for a month to six weeks.

Tony Viessman was in my recruit class, and he was an expert shot. But, he didn't

tell anyone when he got there. Tom West [Pasley] was the firearms instructor. When we were in class, Tom would have to tell Tony to pay attention. But, he'd fall asleep again. Tom told us when we got our weapon we were not to do anything to it. If we thought the sight wasn't right, we were to tell Tom. He'd decide if anything needed to be done.

At the range, five recruits would shoot five rounds at the target, then move, so the next five could shoot. Some of us got up to shoot and our hands weren't steady. But, Tony, he held up his weapon and shot five times in a row. You could hardly see the barrel move when he cocked his gun. Tom had binoculars and was watching us. We saw him lean forward and could tell he was surprised. Tony had shot all five of those rounds in an area about the size of a half dollar.

Well, Tom came down and said, "Viessman! You're either the luckiest #\$@ or you know how to shoot!" Tony told him he was just lucky. After that, once our range time was over, there they'd be, Tom and Tony ... shooting. Some days, Tom would win and others, it'd be Tony. The class started to make bets on who would win on a particular day.

One day, they flipped a coin and Tony was to be first. He aimed his gun, and shot once. The bullet hit the side of the target. He didn't say a word, he just put the gun in his holster and walked off ... He knew Tom had gotten into his locker and adjusted the sight.

Tony tried to get Tom back. Tony took a great deal of time cutting up little rubber bands and when Tom went back into the kitchen to talk to the cooks, he mixed those little pieces in with Tom's pipe tobacco and then zipped the pouch shut. Tom came back to the table. In time, he pulled out his pipe, filled it from the pouch, and lit it. He took one inhale, stood up, and left the room. You could tell by his face he was feeling the effects of the rub-

ber bands, but he wasn't going to give Tony anything.

Fulton being my hometown, I just knew I wouldn't be put in Troop F. We were allowed to list three places. I believe I put Troop A, Troop B, and Troop I. When they made the assignments and I got Troop F, I almost fainted.

I was stationed in Jefferson City, Zone 1. I worked out of Jeff for six months. Ralph Eidson was my first sergeant. He was quite a man. Then, I went to Fulton. That was unheard of—to send somebody back to their hometown in six months.

Paul Volkmer was the zone commander in Mexico at the time. I got acquainted with Paul when he was in Jefferson City. He came to me and said, "I need someone to go to Fulton." He asked if I wanted to go. I told him it was a slim chance I'd get to go up there. Colonel Waggoner knew I was from Fulton. Paul told me that wasn't what he was asking. I asked if the state would pay for the move and he said yes. So, I said, "Load up the truck!"

I rode with Bill Fishbeck for two or three weeks, but they didn't have the field training like they do now. You learned by flying by the seat of your pants. I would ride with him two or three hours one day and then not ride with him for a couple of days. He was a really good officer. I just kind of followed him; I observed what he was doing. He didn't say, "You do this." But, he was a really good trooper. We just buried Bill two weeks ago (July 2005). He was 78.

I only had my immediately family in the area. I had no cousins, aunts, or uncles here. June just had her immediate family. So, I never had a problem enforcing the law living in my hometown. I treated everyone the same. They taught us to treat the person you had contact with as if it was you.

In 1960, the weight station was in this zone at Kingdom City. Weight Inspector Herbert Lee was one of the inspectors.

We [those assigned to the zone] were all fisherman or hunters. Herb had gone to Honeywell Lake one day when he was supposed to be at work at 4 o'clock. His fishing buddy put a fishhook through his thumb. So, they had to go to a doctor to get that out. He wasn't feeling well, so Herb didn't come to work.

That day, I'd just pulled into the weight station and had my car pointed back out to Highway 40. The zone office and weight station were combined—just a doorway between them. I opened the door and walked into the scale house. Volkmer was bent over in his chair looking in a lower drawer of a file cabinet through some reports. I had just spoken to him when the scale house exploded. I thought the world had just ended. Concrete blocks hit me, one hit the back of Paul's chair, one of them went through the window. If Paul had sat up, it would have taken his head off.

I got up and was looking at the front of a big truck without a driver. The driver had stopped his truck and gone to get something to eat. He'd pulled the ICC valve. When the air leaked off it released the brake, and the truck rolled down the hill. Truckers used the ICC valve as a parking break. Trucks didn't have the type of breaks they have now.

The truck was apparently coming down the hill when I walked into the weight station. I just didn't pay attention to it. The front wheels of the tractor jumped over the platform the station sat on and penetrated the whole east side of the building. The first set of tires off the tractor came up over the lip, but, the second set didn't have enough force, so didn't go over. If it had cleared, it would have knocked the building down. If Herb had been working it would have pinned him practically in two. Paul was lucky he wasn't standing up, or he could have been killed. I ended up with back injuries over that. I was in the hospital in Columbia for several weeks. I still

take therapy. But, I managed to work all those years without having an operation.

Zone three consisted of six officers and three counties. We had two in Montgomery, two in Callaway, and two in Audrain County. Volkmer was the zone sergeant over the zone. I know there is probably 10 times as much traffic here now than there was then, but they have more troopers in Callaway County now than we had in the whole zone. During the week nights, after 10 or 11 o'clock, there wasn't any traffic of which to speak.

I worked the road basically for 10 years. I had three different lives on the Patrol (road, MVI, CVE). The road is whatever comes up—wrecks, trucks, murders, and so forth.

My first murder occurred in the city of Auxvasse. It was summertime, somewhere about 8:30. It was beginning to get dark. There were three or four guys—they were all black. They were in this old shanty across the railroad track, shooting craps, playing cards, and drinking. One told the other one he was cheating. He said, "I want my money." The other guy wouldn't give it to him; said he didn't cheat. The first guy told them he was going home and getting his shotgun—they better not be there when he got back. He had to walk  $\frac{1}{4}$  a mile to get home. Wasn't long, and he opened the door and said, "I told you, you better not be here when I get back." He shot the one man in the chest, laid the gun down on the table, and walked out.

The chief of police of Auxvasse called Troop F and told them about the shooting. I was in Kingdom City. When I came into town, the marshal told me he knew who did it. When he told me the name, I said I'd just passed him sitting on the curb. So, I went back and arrested him. That was my first big case—kinda cut and dried.

On the [subject of] wrecks—you never get used to it, you just accept it. I could pretty well accept the older people who

were fatalities or seriously injured. What was hard were the kids."

Here, Rip pauses a moment, recalling a sad incident. It is obvious that time hasn't eased the effect of working wrecks involving young children. Visibly affected, he continues his story, but moves on to another subject.

"I'm just lucky that I didn't shoot anybody and they didn't shoot me. Always kinda wished in one way that I could have a surveillance camera that would show me how many guns were pointed at me over the years, or the times when if I'd said or done the wrong things I'd been shot.

I worked several airplane crashes. That was the most difficult. There was a family that lived somewhere in the St. Louis area. They'd been down to the Lake of the Ozarks. They took off from a private strip down there in the dark somewhere around midnight. They didn't show up, and hadn't filed a flight plan. We sent out a search party. All of the foliage was out and you couldn't see anything. About four or five days went by, and a farmer called and told me some buzzards were flying around back behind his property. He didn't have any cattle there and wasn't sure if it was the plane.

He rode around on his tractor before I got there and when I arrived, he told me he'd found the airplane. The man, his wife, and three children, all of them were in the plane except the toddler. It was my conclusion from the wreckage and the way it went in, the father, mother, and two children were buckled in. This little girl was apparently thrown out or the door came open and she either crawled out or fell out. She was in a little tree, hanging where a shoot [small branch] came from the trunk. It had strangled her.

I've worked train wrecks where a mother and two or three kids were struck and carried  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile down the track. Worked a train derailment in Sturgeon.

That's why I don't have a sense of smell — from the chemicals on that train."

June added, "They had to evacuate the town, but the troopers had to stay. They were up there over 24 hours. When he came home, he had just walked into the house and the odor was so bad I made him take his Patrol clothes off in the garage."

Rip experienced a variety of special details over the years.

"I was there, in Kansas City, during that riot. They assigned me and another officer to two Kansas City detectives. They were assigned to the red light district. We more or less rode around with them and were backup for them. They made the stops and questioned the hookers. We put one little, old gal in jail three times in one night. Wasn't really part of the riot, but if something had happened on Lafayette Street, we'd have been in the thick of it. We never did get down where they had the firebombs and shootings and were setting buildings on fire.

During the Lincoln University riot, I was there. I was assigned to guard the power plant for 12-hour shifts. I can't tell you what exactly started it, but it was a racial thing. It was thought they'd try to blow up the power plant.

I liked the State Fair. I had carnival duty. That's what Tom Pasley had, and I sat and watched him draw cartoons sometimes. I didn't miss many of the state fairs. I also worked football detail. I enjoyed it. George Payne, Larry [Long] and I had the Jefferson City parking lot for awhile. We took care of these people from JC. They always had fried chicken and potato salad ... We'd go over and eat after we parked them."

Rip was promoted to corporal June 1, 1974.

"The next phase [after road duty] of my career was MVI. Bill Prenger and I shared the troop. The captain split the troop up. Bill had counties south of the



*Ret. Sgt. M.B. "Rip" Russell, 2001.*

river and I had counties north of the river. We'd alternate when we were giving the MVI courses and exams. I'd take one week and Bill would take the other. I enjoyed it for a while ... It was seven or eight years. I inspected those school buses. We had a good time, but when you see yellow ... yellow ... yellow—I despised those buses. You'd holler out, 'Wheels chocked—I'm going under the bus.'"

He was promoted to sergeant May 1981.

"I was assigned to CVE in 1981. I worked with the men ... had two trucks and the scale at Kingdom City. I supervised seven or eight people in the field. I enjoyed that. I very seldom worked "undercover" CVE myself, I'd have someone from another troop come in. I enjoyed the mechanical part of the commercial vehicle enforcement.

When they were redoing the communications area at Troop F, I told Captain B.D. Smith I had a friend in Fulton (Jack Palmer) who always wanted to do something for the Patrol. Jack worked on a needlepoint of the communications patch for about a year. Capt. Smith said he'd take it. It's hanging on the wall there now. They had a little ceremony. It was a good tribute to Jack.



You've heard the phrase, 'Got a hold of something you can't let go of?' Well, that happened to me. I was at the Mexico Police Department and had a 20-year-old try to get my weapon. We were wrestling and he put his hand on my chin and pulled my head back roughly. He was on drugs and booze. Then, the guy put his hand through the jail door window and cut his artery. There was blood everywhere and I was slipping and sliding in it. I hollered for help—the chief of police and another guy had a second man in another room interrogating him, and they came to help me.

As a result of that incident, my head was injured. In 1994, I had to have brain surgery to stop the pain in my head from radiating down my ear and neck. It was successful after two surgeries. Some days are better than others."

Rip retired September 1, 1988. When asked if he would do it all over again, he replied, "Probably. The Patrol has been good to us." After retirement, Rip and June worked a farm with 39 head of cattle and a horse. They later sold the farm. Rip says they've worn out three motor homes traveling. He also served as Eastern District commissioner of Callaway County for two terms after retiring from the Patrol.

"We have three children, two girls and a boy, and now we have seven grandchildren. We have one great-grandchild." Their children now live in Columbia, Millersburg, and Mexico, Missouri. Rip and June celebrated 55 years of marriage in May 2005.

*(This interview took place August 2005.)*

# CHARLES F. “FRANK” DURHAM

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*Mr. Charles F. “Frank” Durham was a pioneer. He was the second civilian chemist hired to work in the Patrol’s Crime Laboratory where, prior to 1962, only uniformed members performed laboratory tests. He and Mr. Afton L. Ware determined procedures and protocols for a division that grew from a handful of uniformed members at General Headquarters to one uniformed member and 70 civilian employees working at GHQ and five satellite laboratories. For 34 years, Frank helped mold the Crime Lab into what it is today—a group of respected, gifted, and dedicated professionals.*

Charles F. “Frank” Durham was born on November 26, 1929, in Macon, MO. His parents, Walter and Clare Durham, had seven children, six of whom survived to adulthood.

“I had one brother, Walter Jr., and five sisters: Rosemary, Marjorie, Dorothy, Martha, Connie. Connie was younger than me, but died when she was three years old. I am the youngest who survived. My father was an electrician. I lived a normal, small town life.”

Frank graduated from Macon High School in 1947.

“I wasn’t very good in sports. I enjoyed them, but I didn’t play any varsity sports.”

Frank attended Northeast Missouri State Teachers College in Kirksville, Missouri, where he earned a bachelor’s of science education. He attended the school from September 1947 to May 1951. In January 1952, he joined the U.S. Air Force.

“I went to pilot training in Georgia and Texas. I went to advance fighter pilot train-



*Mr. C. Frank Durham, 1962.*

ing in Panama City, Florida, at Tyndall Air Force Base. Then, I was stationed at O’Hare Air Force Base in Chicago. O’Hare wasn’t quite like it is now. They were starting to build what they have now when I left there.

I liked the Air Force. I enjoyed the fighter pilot training. I flew all over the United States and served temporary duty in several places.”

Frank was honorably discharged from the service on August 31, 1956.

“When I got out of the Air Force, I taught in Macon High School for six years—chemistry, physics, and biology. I did graduate work during the summer breaks when I was teaching. I had classes at Northeast Missouri State University and the University of Missouri. If I had not gone to work with the Patrol, I would have received my master’s degree that summer.”

On June 1, 1962, Frank became the second chemist hired in the Patrol’s Crime Laboratory. Afton Ware was hired one month before him.



*Chemists Afton Ware (background) and C. Frank Durham (foreground) work in the Patrol's Crime Lab in the Broadway Building, 1962.*

"Initially, it was a higher salary. I knew nothing about laboratory work or the Crime Lab business. Apparently, Ralph Eidson and K.K. Johnson thought I could learn the job and they hired me. I heard about the job from a couple of local officers in Macon. I wrote a letter just for the heck of it. The day after I wrote it, one of the local troopers was at my door asking if I could go down that night for an interview.

His wife was the school secretary and she told me first. Another trooper's wife saw me in the grocery store and egged me to write it, and I did. The school secretary called me one morning before I'd left home and said, 'Can you come in a little early? Ed wants to talk to you.' Ed was her husband. Anyway, I got in his patrol car and we talked about it. Mary, Scoop Usher's wife, was the one who egged my wife and I on in the grocery store one day. She and Sgt. Ed Ferguson pushed me on.

We were in the Broadway building then. We had one small room that was the chemistry area, and outside of that was

another area where we had a couple of instruments. Then, there was a large open area where we had the records, the clerk, and Ralph Eidson, who was a sergeant there, had his desk. Kenneth Miller had his firearms room next to our part of the lab. We had a photographer [a civilian] whose main job was to make photostats. There was no such thing as a Xerox then. Kenny and Ralph both did polygraph in the lab at that time. We did polygraph even out here [GHQ].

We didn't have anyone in the lab itself to do fingerprint work. They had to bring in Frank Forgey from the Identification Bureau. He would come in and do the fingerprints. We didn't have a regular fingerprint employee in the lab until we moved here [GHQ Annex] and they transferred Jim Runkle up from Rolla. He was a latent print man; he was very good. We had several photographers and eventually Tom Buel was our photographer.

We were in the Broadway building until October 1963. Then, we moved here. We had quite a bit more space than we'd had

before. We outgrew this space too, eventually. Essentially, it was on-the-job training. Afton and I visited the St. Louis City Lab and the St. Louis County Coroner's Lab. They gave us some of their procedures. And, we had books in the laboratory library that helped us.

In the early years, I ran lots of blood alcohol tests — used a chemical test then. Afton and I did trace evidence and chemical work. Anything that wasn't firearms, tool marks, or latent prints, we did it. This evolved over the years as we got more people and the instrumentation became available. There were more processes available; more of a variety of tests that could be performed. Of course, one person can't do everything. Afton and I couldn't do everything either. I don't think we sent any innocent people to jail, but I don't think many [criminals] got away, either.

They can do so much more now than we could do then. Their results—there were times we could not say there was definitely a match. Now, with DNA, they can make positive matches. The instrumentation is much more involved. Initially, a lot of the chemical procedures were very tedious and took a long time. It isn't easy now, but it's different.

There were a number of cases that were hard. I worked on some 15,000 cases in my time. They ranged from blood alcohols to homicide. Afton and I helped the Division of Health write the original rules for the blood alcohol program. At that time we had to go to court frequently to prove the breath test instruments. I think today it's accepted, but at that time it wasn't. It was kind of a fight every time.

I taught some of the original classes in the Breathalyzer program. That was one of our big jobs for several years. We had to correlate blood samples with breath tests samples and tests, so we could say the breath test instruments were accurate. I



*Mr. C. Frank Durham, 1996*

think they are pretty well accepted nowadays without much trouble. I also taught criminalistics at Northeastern Missouri State and Lincoln University (with Patrol approval, but on my own time).

Originally, 15 hundredths (.15) was the intoxication level and that was pretty much accepted then. Now, it's .08, which I think is more accurate. So, it's gradually gone down. The 15 hundredths was the prima fascia evidence. You have to drink an awful lot to get to 15 hundredths."

Frank was promoted through the years. He became a Chemist II on December 1, 1970; Chemist III on March 1, 1972; and senior forensic chemist on October 1, 1973.

"They use 'criminalist' now, which is a good title, a good term. I retired as a criminalist supervisor. The title criminalist is standard and is accepted all across the country."

"The officers who preceded them in the Laboratory influenced Frank Durham and Afton Ware. Likewise, Frank and Afton had a powerful and lasting influence on all of the criminalists who have been hired and trained since. They infused into each new person's training their meticulous attention to scientific detail, caution in interpreting results, and impartiality in reporting conclusions," said Quality Assur-



ance Coordinator Tom Grant, who was hired in 1979. "If any testing result was questioned in any way it was rejected and not reported until all questions had been resolved. Court testimony was always within the limitations of the testing that had been performed."

Tom continued by saying, "This conservative approach to conducting forensic examinations produces quality results that are accepted in the Missouri criminal justice system. The reputation of the Patrol's Laboratory staff is highly respected by their peers and by the agencies that submit casework to the Missouri State Highway Patrol Crime Laboratory System. The former "new hires" are now the senior members of the Laboratory. They continue to agree with and to perpetuate this scientifically accepted approach to forensic science. The legacy of Frank Durham and Afton Ware lives on!"

Frank retired July 1, 1996.

"My daughters live here in town," said Frank. "One works for the Department of Revenue and the other works for a small trucking company. My son, Chris, is in ISD. Chris has two stepchildren and two children.

Retirement has been great. My wife and I have enjoyed several trips—a couple overseas, and a few winter trips to Florida. We also enjoy going to Branson. Mostly though, we just hang out with our dog, Ebony, and do whatever strikes our fancy. I enjoy having breakfast on Tuesday mornings with the Wears Creek Yacht Club."

*(This interview took place in early 2006.)*

# DALE P. SHIKLES

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*This interview with Senior Chief Driver Examiner Dale Shikles took place a few months before his retirement. At the time of the interview, Dale had been assistant director of the Driver Examination Division for almost 10 years. He came prepared for this interview, and shared several historically important documents — specifically, Special Order No. 16-52. Dated June 12, 1952, and signed by Colonel David Harrison. This order directed the beginning of the Patrol's driver examination duties. The order included a list of those members assigned to administer driver examinations. Dale was soft-spoken, knowledgeable, and dedicated to driver education.*

Dale P. Shikles experienced a typical childhood. Born to Paul and Ruby (Amos) Shikles of Enon, Missouri, Dale has many good memories of working on the family farm and living in a close-knit community. Many of his neighbors were relatives. Dale came to work for the Patrol June 1970, working in the Motor Vehicle Bureau, which was located in the Jefferson Building.

"I wasn't sure what to expect, but everyone was nice. There was a good group of guys to work with. At that time, the MVB was open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We worked split shifts—17 days on and 11 days off—seven, midnights; three, 4 p.m. to midnight shifts; and seven, day shifts), which I never got used to. At that time, the registration files and driving record files were not completely automated. Troops sent us messages via teletype. A lot of the information troopers



*Driver Examiner Dale P. Shikles, 1981.*

needed had to be looked up manually and report back to the troop via teletype.

In November 1971, Dale transferred to Troop F.

"That was during the time the Department of Revenue was automating all of their driving records and vehicle information. In the process of automating the files, five employees had to be reassigned to other divisions. Automation also eliminated the need for a midnight shift. Employees worked days and evenings. Of the five employees reassigned, two went to what is now the Information Systems Division, and three were given the opportunity to be the first civilians on the desk at Troop F. I was assigned to Troop F.

The desk was quite a different experience. At that time, no other troop had civilian desk personnel. It was a pilot program to see if civilians could work the desk. I worked with many good people and enjoyed working the desk.



*Driver Examiner Dale Shikles is pictured with the first Commercial Driver's License Examiner Training Session in 1990. The session took place at the Safety Center located at Central Missouri State University in Warrensburg, MO. The five-day training addressed how to conduct road tests under the new CDL program. Driver examiners and driver examiner sergeants from around the state attended.*

Most calls were what you'd expect. Some, about road conditions, were amusing.

Of the three assigned to the desk, one civilian resigned, one transferred to Driver Examination Division, and eventually, I transferred back to MVB when an opening occurred.

Dale would then apply for a driver examiner position in April 1973.

"I wasn't old enough to apply for DE until I turned 21. I always had an interest in it and was looking forward to working a



*Chief DE Fount Foushee, Troop A; Chief DE Burt Cunningham, Troop D; Chief DE Dale Shikles, Q/ DE(standing); Chief Examiner Marie Klevorn, Troop C (standing), take part in training for the CDL pre-trip inspection test.*



regular shift Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

I know DE was formed in 1952 and five members were trained to give tests. In 1955, civilian driver examiners began testing. Twenty-six civilian examiners reported for duty on July 26, 1955.

In 1973, all training occurred on the job. I was assigned to Jefferson City, but gave tests in all 13 counties of Troop F. My supervisors were William F. Chapman, Lloyd C. Cordes, and Duaine Detwiler. They trained me in the administration of testing.

The job of an examiner is always changing due to the different types of applicants who need the service. In 1973, we probably gave tests in eight or nine foreign languages. Today, we have tests in 11 languages.

When I first started testing, everyone had to come in for both written and driving tests. Drivers from out-of-state had to do so also. Now, they can surrender their out-of-state license and get a new one without testing. I think it would have been a good thing to keep the written test requirement. It's one of the few times a person will pick up a driver's guide and review the driving laws.

If the applicant had an operator's license and wanted a chauffeur's license, they took the written and driving tests for chauffeur. Today, that applicant would take only the written test for chauffeur. Later on, there was a law passed requiring drivers of school buses to take a separate written and skills tests.

I experienced a few minor traffic crashes while I was administering tests. Usually, you can verbally intervene to avoid a traffic accident. When I first started, I was a little nervous about riding with drivers who may or may not be proficient. But, you get used to it.

The biggest change in the driver examination program was when the commercial driver's license testing began in

1990. The U.S. Congress passed the commercial driver's license (CDL) law in 1986. This law required the states to license commercial drivers under minimum federal standards. All states had to be in compliance with the law by April 1, 1992.

I was transferred to General Headquarters in 1987. At that time, I was a driver examiner supervisor. That year was when the Patrol began preparing for the CDL program. I was a supervisor assigned to the division to assist in that endeavor.

Two representatives from each state attended train-the-trainer program in Appleton, Wisconsin, to learn scoring procedures for testing commercial drivers. Driver Examiner Bob McGraw, Troop C, and I went to this training. We came back and trained others. We didn't train all of the examiners, only some of them. We trained all of the supervisors, which included sergeants who supervised DE."

During this time of preparation, Dale was promoted to chief driver examiner. There were only three chief driver examiners at that time. They were assigned to Troops A, C, and D, and supervised the driver examiner supervisors.

"The CDL program started with a written test in January 1990. The driving skills portion of the test began in July 1990. We didn't have any sites available to administer the skills test initially, due to the amount of space needed for the commercial vehicle. It was required that drivers be tested in a vehicle representative of the class of license for which they applied. Initially, drivers meeting certain criteria were "grand fathered", which meant they weren't required to take the driving skills test. However, every driver had to take the written test.

The CDL program is one of the best changes in the history of the driver testing program. It is a much more effective way to ensure drivers have minimum driving skills to operate large trucks and buses."





*Driver Examiner Dale Shikles administers a motorcycle skills test in the late '70s.*

Dale possesses a commercial vehicle license. The Patrol owns a 2002 T2000 Kenworth truck, purchased by a federal grant, and used for the purpose of auditing and training state CDL examiners and third party examiners. Currently, there are approximately 48 third party test sites. "Captain Billy R. Nelson and myself audit all the state CDL sites."

"After a six-month probationary period at General Headquarters, I became a chief driver examiner and continued working on the CDL program. In 1987, the Driver Examination Division director was Lt. Robert J. "Bob" Hagen; the assistant director was Sergeant Joseph C. Bacon. Later, Sergeant Ralph W. Robinett transferred into the division to assist in imple-

menting the CDL program. The division secretary was LaFern Cockrell."

In 1990, Dale was promoted to senior chief driver examiner. He remained in the division, supervising CDL implementation. Once the Patrol's CDL program was in place, Dale supervised all aspects of the program. He was named assistant director of the Driver Examination Division in 1995, and continues in that capacity.

"One of the good changes I've seen in the driver examination area is the addition of a chief examiner in each troop. It was needed. We've also upgraded many of the driver examination offices and CDL sites



*Senior Chief Driver Examiner Dale Shikles portrays a motorcycle license applicant during driver examiner training in October 2003.*

throughout the state. The upgrades have improved working conditions for examiners over the years.

That is to say the offices have become a little nicer. Several of the locations now are leased by the state for the purpose of testing drivers. Before, much of the space used for testing was donated to the Patrol by city and county entities. Many spaces



*Senior Chief DE Dale P. Shikles, 2001.*

are still donated. We continue to give tests from free space in community buildings, courthouses, National Guard Armories, etc. We added new facilities for CDL testing in Jefferson City, Lee's Summit, Sedalia, Macon, and St. Louis, and are in the process of developing a new facility at Strafford, Missouri.

The addition of the graduated driver's license, effective January 1, 2001, was a good change in the program. I feel it's a step in the right direction. However, I'd like to see that law expanded to prohibit the number of teenage passengers in the vehicle. I would like to see the addition of a restriction that limits the number of teenage passengers during the intermediate phase of the graduated license (ages 16-18).

Another very good change to the program was the addition of computerized testing. As the person is taking the written test on the computer, the computer recognizes when the person either passes or fails the test and stops the test. This saves time for the applicant and examiners.

Even before graduated licensing, we gave out a "parents as teachers guide" to

help them teach their children how to drive. I personally passed my driving test in Eldon, Missouri. DE Lloyd Cordes administered my driver's test. He later became my supervisor."

*Dale's wife, Theresa (Thoenen), is from Frankenstein, MO, in Osage County. Dale and Theresa are parents to Dale's son, who lives in Lee's Summit, Missouri, and Theresa's four children: a son in Columbia, Missouri; a son in Tallahassee, FL; a daughter in Murphreesboro, Tennessee; and a daughter in Jefferson City. They enjoy four grandchildren, who live in Jefferson City, Indianapolis, and Tennessee. Dale's older sister, DeeEllen Maher, lives in Eldon, Missouri. His nephew is Tpr. Neil R. Atkinson, Troop F. His younger brother, Dennis, died in 1997.*

*(This interview took place in June 2005.)*